THE PRIVILEDGE OF THE Saints on Earth, BEYOND Those in HEAVEN,

In respect of Gifts and Graces exercised, Duties and Services performed, sufferings and Tryals undergone by them, which the Glorified are not capable of.

BEING

The Sum of a Discourse upon a part of *Hezekiah's* Song of Thanksgiving after his Recovery from his Sickness.

To which is added, A short Discourse of the Nature and Extent of the Gospel-day; repching from the Destruction of the Old, to the Erection of the New *Jerusalem*, out of Zech. 14. 6, 7.

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LONDON,
Printed for *John Allen*, at the White-Horse in *Wentworth*-street,
1673.

Courteous Reader,

Thou art desired to correct with thy Pen these following *Errata's.*

PAge 9. Liné 15. for imparted, read *imported.* P. 11. in the Margin, r. *Epi. 3. last.* P. 13. l. 6. f. hence, r. *here.* P. 16. l. 10. for Spiritual, r. *special.* P. 22. in the Margin, r. *Job* 7. 2. P. 23. l. 10. for the, r. *this.* P. 35. l. 23. blot out *not.* P. 51. l. 28. r. *bridled.* P. 53. in the Margin, r. *Luke* 8. 48. *Luke* 7. 50. P. 65. l. 9. for the, r. *your.* P. 91. l. 23, 24. for Argumentations, r. *Augmentations.* P. 92. l. 8. for *for*, r. *so.* P. 92. l. last, for were not the, r. *were it not for the.* P. 95. l. 20. f. from plain to Plain, r. *from Place to Place.* P. 101. l. 22. for lon, r. long.

In the second Sermon in the Epistle, for *so*, r. *therefore.*

TO THE READER.

THe greateſt and higheſt Honour of the reaſonable Creature is to ſerve him, who is the beſt Good, and laſt End. Herein do we communicate with Angels, whoſe glory it is that they are *Miniſtring Spirits*, always beholding the face of God our Father for this very purpoſe. How diligent then ſhould we be to lay hold on, and to improve all opportunities of ſervice, ſeeing our time is ſo ſhort, our work ſo great, add *Heb.* 1 14.

our ſalvation nearer than when we firſt believed? The Son of God hath given us a glorious pattern herein, *I muſt work the work of him that hath ſent me*, &c. Chriſt Jeſus our Maſter improved all opportunities, went up and down doing good, filling all places where he came with the ſavour of his Doctrine and Miracles, becauſe he knew his time was ſhort, and the recompence of reward at hand. The ſerious thoughts hereof would exceedingly ſpur us to a holy diligence, eſpecially conſidering that Heaven is a place not of work but reward, where the Saints will be diveſted of ſerving and honouring God in many of theſe ways, wherein now (through grace) they are enabled to bring much glory to his Name. Many Graces, Duties, Gifts have here their place, while we are *Viatores*, but ſhall have no room when we come to be *Comprehenſores*.

John 9.4.

Heb. 12. 2.

And

And this is the design of the worthy Author in this little Tract: *viz.* to set before thee the great opportunities thou hast of service to God, while thou art on this side Heaven, beyond what are to be enjoyed there. Were this throughly weighed, how would Holiness be promoted, Saints thrive, Families flourish, Churches revive? we should not so passionately desire death meerly to be rid of all sufferings, but shoud prize life, if with it Christ Jesus might be magnified. It is glorious work that God calls his Saints to 'ere they get to Heaven. Is not suffering for Christ, glorious work? is not the exercise of Faith, Hope, and Patience, glorious work? To do good, and to communicate both to the bodily and spiritual necessities of Saints and others, is not this glorious work? In a word, to propagate pure Religion, & undefiled, to the generations to come, is not this

1 Pet. 4. 14.

glorious work? Why, herein are the Saints on Earth priviledged beyond those in Heaven, where there is no room for the exercise of these Graces, and Duties.

Oh! who would not pray that he might live to do God service? spin not out precious time unprofitably. Pray that thou mayest be counted worthy of this calling (which is indeed a high calling) and fulfil all the good pleasure of his Goodness, and the work of Faith, Hope, and Patience, with power, that the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Thes. 1. 11, 12.

Isaiah 38 18, 19.

For the Grave cannot praise thee, Death cannot celebrate thee: They that go down into the pit, cannot hope for thy truth.

The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: The Father to the Children shall make known thy Truth.

THe words are a part of *Hezekiah's* thanksgiving for his recovery from his sickness (beginning at the ninth *verse*.) This good King was not simply afraid of Death, as appeareth, *ver.* 3d. But

First, He had then no Son to succeed him in the Kingdom, (for *Manasseh* was not then born) and he was solicitous for a Successour, and the fulfil- 1.

ling of God's Promiſe to *David*, which we have four times expreſſed, (*viz.* 2 Sam. 7. 12, 13, 16. 1 King. 8. 25. Pſal. 89. 28, 29. & 132. 12. In all which places we find this Promiſe to *David*, that there ſhould not fail a Man of his Seed, to ſit upon the Throne of *Iſrael*, ſo that his Children took heed to their wayes, to walk before the Lord in truth, as *David* their Father had done. Here was a Promiſe with a Condition. And hence it is, I ſuppoſe, that *Hezekiah*, in his Prayer (*verſ.* 3d) makes mention of his fulfilling that Condition, *viz.* That *David's* Children muſt take heed to their way, (if they deſired to ſit upon his Throne) that they walk before him, as *David* had done. For, ſaith *Hezekiah*, *Remember now, O Lord, I beſeech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart,* & have done that which is good in thy ſight. As much as to ſay, 'Lord! I hope thou wilt 'not cut me off, and leave the Kingdom 'without an Heir of the Seed of *David*, 'ſeeing thou did'ſt promiſe him that 'thou wouldeſt not; provided that 'his Children took heed to their way, 'that they walked before him as *David* 'did. And, through thy Grace, I have

'lo.

'so walked in my measure, and there-
'fore, I hope, thou wilt not take me
'away, who have performed the Con-
'dition. So that *Hezekiah* (though a very good Man) was afraid of Death; yet not simply, but lest the Kingdom should want an Heir of the Seed of *David*.

And this that I have said confirms the Opinion of those that say, that *Hezekiah* was loth to dye, because then he had no Heir; though that was not all the reason.

For, Secondly, He was also loth to dye in God's displeasure, so as a Child of God may do. For God doth testifie his temporal displeasure many times against his own Children. *If his Children forsake my Law, and walk not in my Judgments: If they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments; Then will I visit their transgressions with the Rod, and their iniquity with Stripes.* And he testifies it sometimes in their death, as he did in the death of the Prophet that came out of *Judah*, and Prophesied against the Altar at *Bethel*, who was slain by a Lion for his disobeying the Word of the Lord. 2. *Psal.* 89. 30,31,32. 1 *King.* 13. 21,22.

And *Hezekiah* was afraid, that God had

had some controversie with him, and he was loth to dye in God's displeasure. Peradventure, he was somewhat lifted up with his miraculous deliverance from the Host of *Senacherib*, mentioned in the former Chapter: For God did wonderful things, as you know, to effect that deliverance, and this sickness was immediately after the destruction of *Senacherib's* Army; for that happened in the 39th year of *Hezekiahs* life, who lived fifteen years after his recovery from his sickness, which two numbers make the whole number of *Hezekiah's* years, which were 54, 2 *King.* 18. 2. So that this sickness of his fell out presently upon that great deliverance. And the good Man was not so thankful (perhaps) as he should be, but somewhat elevated. For this was his weakness after his recovery. His heart was lifted up, and he rendred not again according to the benefit done to him, for which God was angry with him. What the sin was, I will not positively determine, only I thus conjecture; but that he apprehended God's displeasure for his sin, is evident from the words immediately before my Text, saith he, *Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.*

2 *King.* 18. 2.

2 *Chron.* 32. 25.

There-

Therefore, it ſeems, his ſins lay before the face of God, till his recovery, and upon this account he was loth to dye.

Thirdly, He was loth to dye, as fearing what ſhould become of his Reformation. For he knew what became of *Jehoſhaphat's*, though he left a ſon behind him; and of *Jehojadah's*, though he left a well-educated Nephew behind him. Add hereunto, that he found the Church in a very deplored condition, when he came to the Crown. And as for his preſent Reformation, it had not laſted ſo long as his Father's Deformation and Idolatry; and his Reformation had ſcarce taken root as yet; therefore he was willing to live longer, and not, as yet, to dye. 3.

Fourthly, That which made him the more unwilling, was the nature of his Diſeaſe, which (by the Remedy, and way of Cure, a lump of Figs laid for a Plaiſter upon the Boyl, *Ver.* 21.) I ſay, which by the Cure, ſeems to have been the Peſtilence: And he was not willing to go to Heaven that way; though good Men may dye of that Diſeaſe, and many times have done. But yet a Child of God would, for ſeveral Reaſons, willingly deeline that way of dying, if it might ſtand with the good will and pleaſure of God. Thus

Thus you see the Reasons why *Hezekiah* was loth to dye.

Now then being recovered, and having a lease of his life for 15 years granted him, he writeth down his thanksgiving, as much affected with God's mercy towards him, *vers.* 9, &c.

In the Text read unto you, there is,

1. 1. A Declaration of the state of the Dead, as to the loss of all opportunities ever to praise and magnifie God any more, or to hope for his truth in this world.

2. Secondly, An Assertion of the opportunities enjoyed by the living, thus to praise God, and to make known his Truth; that is, His Truth and Faithfulness in his Promises. For, I conceive, *Hezekiah* hath here a special respect to the Truth and faithfulness of God in his Promise made to *David* and his Seed, in the foremtioned Texts of Scripture.

And therefore it is very likely, that *Hezekiah* made known this Truth and Faithfulness of God to his son *Manasseh*, who was twelve years old when *Hezekiah* dyed. Though *Manasseh* (it seems) did little mind it, or made any good use of it. That Point of Doctrine,

Doctrine, which I shall insist upon, is this, That

Doctrine.

There are opportunities of service to be performed to God in this life, which are not to be enjoyed after death.

Or thus,

The people of God may do that for him in this World, which they cannot do in Heaven.

David therefore makes an Argument of it in his Prayer, and sad Complaint in his Sickness: *For*, saith he, *in death there is no remembrance of thee*; (not but that the Saints in Heaven do remember God, (for they see him there) but they cannot keep up his memorial any longer among the living; he goes on) *In the Grave who shall give thee thanks?* The like we have in the 30th *Psalm*, entitled, *A Song at the Dedication of the house of David, viz.* after his return (as 'tis conceived) from his victory over *Absalom*, who had dreadfully defiled *David's* house with Incest, in abusing his Fathers Concubines; which house therefore *David* endeavours to purge and cleanse in a solemn holy manner at his return, and to dedicate it anew to God. And in that Psalm he sheweth, how he cryed

Psal.6.5.

2 Sam.20. 3.

cryed to the Lord in the day of his trouble, when *Absalom* rose up against him, & when he was afraid of his life, and was loth to dye by the hand of his son; faith he, *What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy Truth?* And dark deserted *Heman* makes use of the same argument, *Psal.* 88. 10, 11. *Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? and shall the dead arise and praise thee? Selah. Shall thy loving kindness be declared in the Grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?* faith he, Thy people may make known thy wonders in this life, but not in the Grave.

Psal. 30. 3.

Psa. 88. 10, 11.

Quest. But then, do not the Saints, when they are dead praise the Lord?

Answ. Yes; But the Psalmist speaketh not of that, but of praising God, and declaring his loving kindness, faithfulness, and righteousness in the land of the living. And all their service that way is at an end, except by Miracle any be raised from the dead, as *Lazarus* and *Tabitha* were. So *Psal.* 115. 17. *The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence.* And hence saith

Davi

David, I shall not dye, but live, and declare the works of the Lord, Psalm. 118. 17. As much as to say, there is no declaring of them after death! Psal. 118. 17.

But what are those services that may be done here, which cannot be done in Heaven, that so we may see the Point in Instances? *Quest.*

They are many; and let me begin with these in my Text. *Answ.*

The living, the living, he shall praise thee i. e. He shall praise thee before the Children of Men in the Land of the living. Now, this is a glorious service, containing as much as is imparted in the first Petition of the Rule of Prayer, *i. e. Hallowed be thy Name*; which, though it be a service done in Heaven, yet in the presence of glorified Saints only, without any propagation of praise to the Name of God, for that is the priviledge of the Saints while they live in this world, where they make the Name of God known to them, that knew it not before. This is the first and highest Petition of all in our prayers, and therefore of greatest concernment. 1.

Secondly, There is another service in my Text, which cannot be performed in Heaven, and it is contained in these 2.

words,

words, *The Father to the Children ſhall make known thy Truth.* And is not this alſo a moſt bleſſed ſervice? for it contains what is imported in the ſecond Petition in the Rule of Prayer, (*viz.*) *Thy Kingdom come.* For this is one excellent way of advancing and enlarging the Kingdom of God in this world, (*viz.*) when Parents ſhall make known the Truth and Faithfulneſs of God to their Children. To which purpoſe conſider, *Pſal.* 78. 2, 7. *Deut.* 4. 9. and 6. 6, 7. And this is the great ſervice of the Saints upon Earth, both Miniſters and People. *The things* (ſaith *Paul* to *Timothy*, 2 Epiſt. Ch. 2. Ver. 2.) *That thou haſt heard of me among many witneſſes, the ſame commit thou to faithful men, who ſhall be able to teach others alſo.* And this is a ſervice, which cannot be done in Heaven. For the dead Saints cannot contribute ought to the enlarging of the Kingdom of Grace in this World; and as for the Kingdom of Glory, there are but two wayes of enlarging that, which are by the departure of the Saints on Earth to Heaven, and by the Reſurrection; in neither of which doth God uſe the ſervice of the glorified Saints at all.

2 *Tim.* 2. 2.

The

The care therefore of the choiceſt Saints hath been, not only for the time of their lives, but for the Generations to come, that they might know what God had done. The time would fail to tell of *Moſes*, and *Joſhua*, and *David*, and *Paul*, whoſe Epiſtles cloſe with this Doxology and hearty deſire of glory to be given to Chriſt in the Churches for ever. The truth is, the whole Scripture is a Book of the Acts and Monuments of the Lord's wonderful works in gathering, and building, protecting, ſaving, and doing good to his Church, and that for this end, that the Generations to come might put their hope and truſt in God. And this was the unanimous deſign of the Pen-men of holy Scripture. *This ſhall be written for the generations to come; and the people which ſhall be created ſhall praiſe the Lord.* *Deut.* 31. 19. *Joſh.* 2. *laſt Chap.* 2 *Chr.* 2. *laſt. Ch.* *Eph.* 3. *laſt.* *Pſal.* 102. 18.

Thirdly, Here in this world the Saints may live exemplarily, *blameleſs and harmleſs, as the ſons of God without rebuke in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe generation.* And this is a great ſervice alſo; For 3. *Phil.* 2. 15.

Firſt, Hereby ſome may come to be converted, 1 *Pet.* 3. 1. and ſo the Kingdom of God is enlarged by this way alſo. And

Secondly, Many hereby will be convinced, and left without excuse in that great day. For this is one way whereby the Sains shall judg the world; they shall judg it *exemplarily*, and (in concurrence with Christ) *sententiarilly*. Now (I say) this is a service, which cannot be done in Heaven; where, First, There is no evil person: Nor Secondly, Any need of examples for the glorified Saints to walk by, who are all perfect, and under the immediate and sole Government of the Spirit of God. There is but one example in Heaven, and that is the exemplary cause of the glorification of our bodies, *viz. The glorified body of Christ.* For in this life the Saints conform to the grace of Christ actively, and at the Resurrection, they conform to his glorified body passively, as to their patern.

Mat. 12. 42. with 1 *Cor.* 6. 2.

Phil. 3. 21

4. Here in this world the Saints have opportunities of reproving Sin, confuting Errors, instructing the Ignorant, warning the Unruly, comforting the Feeble minded, praying for their Relations and Friends, &c. Now there are no such things in Heaven, where there is no Sin, no Error, no Ignorance, no Unruliness, none Afflicted, no praying for Relations

Relations. I remember how dying Mr. *Rollock* was much offended with a Kinſman, for deſiring his Prayers when he ſhould come to Heaven. God will have but one Interceſſor there. *Melch. Adam in vit. ejus.*

Here they may do good to the bodies of Men. For they may feed the hungry, give drink to the thirſty, lodge the harbourleſs, clothe the naked, viſit the ſick and impriſoned; whereas in Heaven there are no neceſſities or wants. 5. Matth. 25. 35, 36.

Here the Saints may ſuffer for Chriſt & give a teſtimony to his Cauſe, and to the Truth, by the loſs of their Relations, and Friends, of their Goods, Health, Eaſe, Credit, Liberty, Houſes, Lands, Countries, Life, &c. For, *Bleſſed are the dead which dye in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their labours, and their works follow them.* And this is ſuch a ſervice, as the very Angels are in no wiſe capable of. 6. Rev. 14. 3.

So that you ſee, there are many ſervices which the Saints may do here for Chriſt, which they cannot do in Heaven.

Indeed, if they could return to this life again, they might do ſuch works as theſe. For when *Lazarus* was raiſed

from the dead, he entertained Christ a-
John 12.2 gain. And when *Tabitha* was raised from the dead, it is very probable that she fell to her good Works and Alms-deeds again, to her making of Coats and Garments again for the poor, as she had
Acts 9.39. been wont (*Act.* 9.39.) But these are rare examples of the returning of the
Job 7.9, 10. dead Saints to this world again. *For as the Cloud is consumed, and vanisheth away: so he that goeth down to the grave, shall come up no more. He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.*

7. Lastly, There are some gifts of grace which cannot be exercised in Heaven. For

1. First, Here the Saints do believe,
1 Co. 13. 12. whereas in Heaven Faith is turned into
2 Cor. 5.7. Vision. Here they walk by Faith, and not by sight, as they shall do in Heaven. And Faith is a gift of Grace, whereby God is much glorified; for it empties and humbles the Heart, and carrieth it forth to Christ, and glorifies God in all his Attributes. Whereas in Heaven the Saints have all in hand, and therefore they live by sight, and not by Faith. There is but one thing there to come to them (to the compleating of

their

their happineſs) and that is, *the reſurrection of the dead*, in the Faith whereof they live, but yet this Faith is of another nature, than that which juſtifieth and ſaveth in this life.

Secondly, It followeth hence, That here in this life the Saints do exerciſe Hope, waiting for the good which is held forth in the Promiſe, which their Faith believeth they ſhall have. Whereas in Heaven, Hope is turned into fruition and enjoyment. *For Hope* (that is, the thing hoped for) *that is ſeen, is not Hope: for what a man ſeeth, why doth he yet hope for?* There is no hope in Heaven (the Fathers to the Children cannot *hope* for thy Truth, as *Hezekiah* here ſaith) except it be of the Reſurrection, whereof the Saints have a moſt joyful expectation. *They are glad, and rejoyce, in that their fleſh doth reſt in hope.* Not that their fleſh doth hope, but that *reſteth*, and their Souls hope for its riſing again. 2. Rom. 8. 24. Pſal. 16. 9.

Accordingly it followeth, That here in this life the Saints do exerciſe their patience, which ceaſeth in Heaven, becauſe our hope ceaſeth there. For patience is the ſervant of Hope, (1 *Theſ.* 1. 3.) called there the *patience of hope*; 3.

Rom.8.25 *For if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.* There is nothing in Heaven to put our patience to it.

4. It is true indeed what the Apostle
1 Cor.13. last. saith, 1 *Cor.*13.*last. Now abideth Faith, Hope, and Charity, these three; but the*
Ver.8. *greatest of these is Charity. Because Charity* (i. e. Love) *never faileth:* (ver.8.) that is Heavens grace in a Spiritual manner. But yet, notwithstanding, even Love it self hath a larger Object here in this world, than in Heaven. For there is a Love here, which cannot be exercised there. And that is,

1. *To love our enemies*, which is the
Mat.5.44. Command of the Gospel, and a great Duty, and was one of the last Acts of Christ upon the Cross, *Luke* 23. 34. And the very last Act of *Stephen* the Protomartyr, who was never like to act it more, *Act. 7. last.. Lord*, saith he, *lay not this sin to their charge.*

2. Here in this life you may love all
Tit.3.2,3. Unregenerate men, and shew it in your desires and endeavours for their conversion.

3. Here also you may exercise a Love of sympathy with all, both good and bad, in their sufferings. But in Heaven there

there is no room for this Love.

And as theſe gifts of Grace forementioned do greatly glorifie God, but ceaſe in Heaven; ſo do Parts and common-Gifts alſo ceaſe there. *For whether there be Propheſies, they ſhall fail; or, whether there be Tongues, they ſhall ceaſe; or whether there be knowledge* (that is imperfect, mediate, and the communication of it to others) *it ſhall vaniſh away.* And yet Propheſying is much to God's glory. For, *He that Propheſieth, ſpeaketh unto men to Edification, Exhortation, Conſolation. And Tongues do alſo edifie.* So likewiſe for knowledge. 5. 1 Cor. 13. 8. 1 Co. 14. 3. Ver. 5.

So that put all this together, and there is much to be done here, whereby God may be glorified, and men edified and benefited, which cannot be done in heaven.

And thus you ſee the Point made good in ſeveral Inſtances, *That there are opportunities of ſervice to be performed to the Lord in this life, which are not to be enjoyed after death.*

Queſt.

But if it be thus; why have ſome of the Saints mentioned in Scripture deſired to dye?

Answer.

Some of the Saints have done ill in so doing, but others upon good ground.

First, Some of them have not done well in desiring death, for they have passionately desired it, and to their own loss, if God should have answered their desires herein. For instance. 1. *Moses*, he was the meekest Man upon the Earth, yet he seems to be in a passion, when he said, *If thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand.* Why? was there no remedy, but God must kill him, and presently too, if the burthen of the people lay a little longer upon him? This was a passionate expression and desire of death. And had he died there presently, he had incurred a double loss (to say no more in it) 1. He had been cut short of the opportunity of doing that eminent service in conducting the people through the Wilderness. For he lived 38 years longer, and did much for God and his people during that time. 2. If he had died then out of hand, he had not dyed, and been buried so honourably, as he was afterwards upon Mount *Nebo*, even by God's hand.

Numb. 11. 15.

Deut. 34.

2. And

2. And though *Job* was a patient Man, yet he paſſionately deſired death. *Oh!* ſaith he, *that I might have my requeſt, and that God would grant me the thing that I long for: Even that it would pleaſe God to deſtroy me, that he would let looſe his hand, and cut me off.* Whereas God meant *Job* bettter than ſo, (*viz.*) to turn his Captivity, and to give him twice as much as he had loſt, and the full number of his former Children, and ſo, to double their number alſo; ſhewing him, that his firſt number was not laſt. Moreover, he ſhall yet live 140 years longer to ſerve and honour God in this world. Again, Job 6.8,9.

3. *Elijah* was a Man ſubject to like paſſions as we are, and being perſecuted by *Jezebel*, *he requeſted for himſelf* that he might dye, and he ſaid, *It is enough now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am not better than my Fathers.* Whereas God intended better for him, (*viz.*) that he ſhould live yet longer, and finiſh his Teſtimony againſt *Ahab*, *Jezebel*, and *Ahaziah*, and then be carried triumphantly to Heaven in a fiery Chariot. So 1 King. 19. 4.

4. *Jonah* would needs dye in a fret, *Oh Lord*, ſaith he, *Take I beſeech thee, my* Jonah 4.3.

my life from me, for it is better for me to dye, than to live. No, *Jonah* was not in case to dye at present, God would not take him at his word, but he must live yet longer and repent.

2. Secondly, As for some others of the Saints, death hath been desired by them, and not impatiently, nor any way sinfully, but very well, and upon good ground. You know

1. Just and devout *Simeon*, when he had taken up Christ in his arms, he Luke 2,29. blessed God, and said, *Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace*; and the ground of this request lies in the words following — *according to thy Word.* His Prayer, it seems, was grounded upon a word from God. For as God had Ver. 26. told him, *that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ*; so he had promised him, that then he should dye, and so his Prayer was grounded upon a Promise.

2. And as for *Paul*, *He desired to depart, and to be with Christ, which* (saith he) *is far better*, i. e. for me. *Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And having this confi-* Phil. 1. 23, 24. *dence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and*

joy of Faith. So that 1. When he desired to dye, he looked upon the benefit thereof abstractedly, and absolutely, but not comparatively. 2. When he looked upon it on comparison with the benefits of life, he was not so positive in the desire of death, but having done great service, and, that too, a long time for Jesus Christ (for then he was *Paul the aged*, Philem. ver. 9.) and being then in prison at *Rome*, he hung for a time in *Æquilibrio*, mid-way between two, till at last the Scale turns to a desire to live, further to serve Jesus Christ, and his Church and people. For though *Paul* was then in prison, yet he did very much good there, which had been lost, had he then gone to Heaven. For his *bonds furthered the Gospel.* And they strengthned the Brethren, and wrought upon several *in Cæsars Palace.* And there he converted *Onesimus*; and there he wrote his Epistles to the *Galatians*, *Ephesians*, *Philippians*, *Colossians*, and the second Epistle to *Timothy* and that to *Philemon.* In all which are many excellent Points of divers kinds, which greatly conduce to the Churches edification: And better a thousand times that *Paul* had been kept 20 years out of Heaven, than

Phil. 1. 12. ver. 13.

than that the Church ſhould have wanted theſe Epiſtles.

Queſt. But is it not lawful then in any caſe, to deſire to dye?

Anſw. Yes; with ſubjection to God's will, in caſe eſpecially there are appearances that a Man's work is at an end. For a Child of God may live ſo long, that his faculties may be impaired, his ſtrength decayed, his ſpirits ſpent, and he may be full of pain too, and ſo ſhut up, that he can do little good. And as *Job* ſaith, *A ſervant that hath wrought hard all the day, and is weary, earneſtly deſireth the ſhadow.* And ſo it is with a Child of God in this caſe. The weary body naturally deſireth the bed. And ſometimes God makes a clear diſcovery to ſome of his ſervants, that their work is at an end. Thus it was with *Paul, I am ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand; I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the Faith.* And it is with gracious Souls, as with the Fruit of the Tree, which when it is ripe, drops naturally from it. There is a Spiritual inſtinct, inclining the Soul of a Believer Heavenward, when the Fruit is ripe: So that they come to their graves, as a ripe Shock of

Job 7. 2.

2 Tim. 4. 6, 7.

of Corn cometh in its ſeaſon. And a deſire to dye in ſuch a caſe is ſtill the better, when it proceedeth from a longing to be freed from ſin, and a deſire to be with Chriſt, *Phil.* 1.23.

Application.

If there are opportunities of ſervice to be performed to God in this life, which are not to be enjoyed after death; and, that the Saints may do that for God in this world, which they cannot do in Heaven; we are then

1. *Informed,*

That Heaven is the place of the Saints reward, and not of their work. When they dye, *they ceaſe from their labours, and their works do follow them.* They do not follow the Saints, as if the Saints were there to follow their work, but they follow them to be rewarded and crowned. For their *courſe is now finiſhed, their race is run, and henceforth is laid up for them a Crown of Righteouſneſs.* Heaven therefore is not their working-place, but their reſting-place; they reſt from their labours; there is much to be received there, but nothing to be done there, but to live in the high

1. Rev 14. 13. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.

high praiſes of God and the Lamb to Eternity.

2. If our opportunities dye together with us, then we are further informed, That (as there is no working in Heaven, ſo) there is no returning after death to work again in this world. *If a Man dye, ſhall he live again?* No, ſaith *Hezekiah* (ver. 11.) *I ſaid in the cutting off of my days, I ſhall go to the Gates of the Grave; I ſhall not ſee the Lord, even the Lord in the Land of the living, I ſhall behold Man no more with the inhabitants of the world.* That is, I ſhall no more appear before the Lord in his Sanctuary, to perform any more ſervice there to him.

Job 14. 14.

As if he ſhould ſay, I ſhall ſee the Lord in Heaven, but I ſhall ſee him & ſerve no more in the Land of the living, which I deſire to do. For when *Iſaiah* brought him the welcome tidings of his recovery, one of firſt things that he ſaith to him is, what is the ſign that I ſhall go up to the Houſe of the Lord? For a King to go to the Houſe of the Lord, and to lead the way to the Worſhip of God, was a very glorious ſervice. He looked upon it as a very great mercy, to ſee and ſerve the Lord in the Land of the living; but

Ver. laſt.

he

he thought he ſhould ſee him ſo no more, nor behold Man any more with the inhabitants of the world; and therefore he ſhould return no more.

Men have but one Soul, and but one opportunity to act for the eternal ſalvation of it; when they are dead, *the Eye that hath ſeen them, ſhall ſee them no more, and he that goeth down to the Grave, ſhall come up no more.* Job 7.8,9, 10.

And therefore it was not *Samuel* riſen from the dead, but the Devil that appeared and ſpake to *Saul* in the houſe of the Witch at *Endor*. For the appearance aſcended out of the Earth in the houſe of the Woman, which was in the Tribe of *Iſſachar*, whereas *Samuel* was buried at his houſe at *Ramah*, which was in the Tribe of *Benjamin*. Beſides, he was buried in his Grave-clothes, whereas he is deſcribed riſing in his Mantle. And he was (as all the Saints are after death) at reſt; whereas he that is there called *Samuel* ſaith to *Saul, Wherefore haſt thou diſquieted me to bring me up?* And it is not in the power of all the Devils in Hell to diſquiet the Saints after death. Other Reaſons I might urge, but theſe may ſuffice. 1 Sam 28. Chap. 1 Sam. 25. 1. 1 Sam. 28. 15.

The

The dead return not again; as *David*
2 Sam. 12. 23. said of his Child, when dead, *I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.* Opportunity is a part of time, and hath nothing to do in Eternity. Neither is there any regress or returning, but by miracle from the Land of forgetfulness.

2. *Instructed in matter of Reproof,*

1. To such as live long, and do but little; whereas we may reckon our lives by the good that we do in this world. For as for lost time, it cannot come into the account of our lives; and it is a pitiful thing to be old only in time: And all the good of many stricken in years will lie within a very little compass; and to be an ancient Man or Woman of two or three years old, sounds like a Contradiction.

Psal. 90. 12. *So teach us* (saith *Moses*) *to number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.* And surely this is one special way of numbring our days; to know how long we have lived in serving our Generation, and what time we have spent that way: and he never applyed his Heart to Wisdom, who hath

hath not learned ſo to number his dayes.

There are but two lives that can be lived in this world, *viz.* a Natural, and a Spiritual; and all live the firſt, but few the ſecond: whereas it is our wiſdom to live ſpiritually; and ſo to live, is to live, Firſt, for the Generations that ſucceed us, ſo as *Hezekiah* here deſired to live. Secondly, To live for Eternity. To live only a natural life; is for Brutes, and not for Men.

And therefore you that are entred into years, and have done but little, are juſtly reprehended, as having lived more like Fools than wiſe Men.

Secondly, What ſhall we ſay to ſuch as have lived to no purpoſe at all? All that they have done, hath been to eat and drink, and make a number. And there are multitudes of theſe, who have profaned their lives, in not anſwering the end of them. They are meer Earth-cumberers, and ſuch who have lived only to themſelves. 2.

Thirdly, But (which is worſe) ſome have lived to wicked purpoſes, having ſpent their days in ſin, and been offenſive both to God and Men, who at laſt will come to dye like *Jehoram*, without being 3. 2 Chr. 21. laſt.

being desired. And such another was *Hezekiah's* Father, even that King *Ahaz*, who when he died, was buried like *Jehoram*, and not brought into the Sepulchres of the Kings of *Israel*. And such another was that persecutor *Jehoiakim*, for whom they lamented not, saying, *Ah Lord, or ah his glory.* Oh! these are to be exploded out of the Land of the living; *For Men shall clap their hands at them, and hiss them out of the world*; he never did good work while he lived, and he shall have never a good word when he dieth. So much for Reprehension.

2 Chr. 28. last.

Jer. 22. 18, 19.

Job 27. last

This Point instructs us in matter of Humiliation. What hath been said, should humble even the very best of God's people, in that they have done no more service for Jesus Christ in their Generation. You have (possibly) done something for him, but you might have done more: You might have praised him more, declared the Truth more to your Children; you might have projected and designed more for the glory of God, and the good of Posterity; you might have devised liberal things, & lived more exemplarily, been more zealous of good works, more edifying in your conversation;

tion; you might have adventured more for Christ; and whereas you have gained two Talents for him, you might have gained five. Truly (for my part) I might have done more, and it humbleth me that I have done so little. I remember it is said of Doctor *Usher* in the Narrative of his Life and Death, that when he was a dying, he was humbled for his omissions. And indeed they are great sins, and the judgment of Christ, at his appearing, will pass much upon good works on the one side, and omissions of them on the other. And therefore we had need to sit in judgment upon our selves for our omissions before we dye. For it is not enough to do good sometimes, but we should be rich in good works, and prepared unto every good work, always abounding in the work of the Lord, giving a portion to seven, and also to eight, going about as Christ did, doing good. And he that is thus exercised, is fit to live, and fit to dye.

Mat. 25. 39 ---end.

1 Tim 6. 18. 2 Tim. 2. 21. 1 Cor. 15. 58. Eccl. 11. 1. Act. 10. 38.

But let us be humbled this day for our neglects. For have not our hearts sometimes checked us, upon reviews of the loss of our opportunities to do such or such a good work? Saith a gracious

and tender heart, when he is come from such a person, or such a place, or such a company, or occasion; "Alas! what "have I omitted? I might have put in "such a word for Jesus Christ, I might "have reproved such a sin, or gi-"ven such or such counsel, or stopt "such a vain discourse, or given such an "example, or moved for such a good "work, &c.

Alas! who knows the errors of his life this way? and therefore this consideration calls for deep Humiliation, and self-judging at this time.

3. *Exhorted.*

We are here Exhorted, and the Point affords Exhortation several ways.

1. To do all the good you are able, during your abode here below, seeing death will put an end to all your opportunities. If God enable you to speak a good word to his honour, and to the edification of others, when you lye a dying, you are never like to do so much good again to Eternity. When you take your leave of the world, you take your leave of doing good. And therefore you had need bestir your selves, while your

your Bodies and Souls abide here together.

Whatsoever therefore thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the Grave whither thou goest. Eccles. 9. 10.

And suppose you have done well hitherto, like a good and faithful servant, *be not yet weary of well doing*, but up and be doing still, and *in due time you shall reap, if you faint not.* Gal. 6. 9. What a deal of good had *Hezekiah* done, before he fell into this sickness? He destroyed the Monuments of Idolatry, set up a notable Reformation, brought back the Tribes of *Israel* to the Lord God of their Fathers. And yet you see here, he is willing to live longer to do more. So *Peter* had done much good in his time; you know he converted about three thousand Souls at the beginning of his Ministry, he had a most happy hansel, *Acts 2d.* And yet he takes another opportunity, and sped well. And after this, he passeth through all quarters, and came at last to *Lydda*, & *Saron*, and *Joppa*, & you know what good he did in the house of *Cornelius*, &c. At length he becomes old, & then he writes to the Saints; *For*, saith he, *I think it meet, as long as* 2 King. 16. 3, 4, 5. 2 Chron. 29. 30. and 31 Chapters. Acts 2d. Acts 3d. v. —44. Acts 9th. Acts 10th. 2 Pet. 1. 13, 14, 15.

I am in this Tabernacle, to ſtir you up, by putting you in remembrance, knowing that ſhortly I muſt put off this my Tabernacle, even as our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath ſhewed me. Moreover, I will endeavour that you may be able after my deceaſe, to have theſe things always in remembrance.

Firſt, ſaith he, I am aware of death approaching.

Secondly, I will therefore do all the good I am able, both with my Tongue and Pen.

Thirdly, I will endeavour that the good I do may live when I am dead; *that you may be able after my deceaſe to have theſe things always in remembrance.*

Even thus we ſhould endeavour to live in this world after our departure. Survive your Funerals, and out-live your deaths. For it is not enough that we ſhall then live in Heaven, but we ſhould endeavour to be doing of that good while we live, that may make us live on Earth; even when we are dead. And in this way the memory of the Juſt ſhall be bleſſed, and the Righteous had in everlaſting remembrance. It is the Saints happineſs to have Glory, and Honour, and Immortality in Heaven; but it is much to the glory and honour of God

Prov. 10. 7. Pſal. 112. 6.

for

for the Saints to be immortalized on Earth, and to live in their good Examples, good Counſels, good Names, and good Works, when their Souls are ſhining in Heaven. Particularly,

1. Dilate and diffuſe the praiſes of God, and make his Name glorious to the utmoſt of your power. And let this be often ſounding in your ears. *The living, the living he ſhall praiſe thee.* Speak much, and live much to his praiſe. *Let the high praiſes of God be in your mouthes.* *Ainſworth*, and the *Dutch* Interpreters render it, *Let the exaltations of God be in your throat*, and it ſuits with the Original, as alſo with the Tranſlation of the 70.

Pſal. 149. 6. רוממות אל בגרונם: Hebr. Αἱ ὑψώσεις τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν λάρυγγι αὐτῶν. *Sept.*

The Exaltations, *i. e.* the lifting up of God in his Name, Attributes, Precept, Promiſes, Threatnings, Providences, &c. let them be in your throats, *i. e.* exalt your voices in exalting theſe praiſes, *cry with the throat*, and lift up your voices like Trumpets. And this argues, that God's praiſes comes from your hearts, when they are thus ſounded, as it were from your throats. And this work exalteth you, and that as high as the Heavens, for it is the very ſervice of Heaven, only it is a greater ſervice, ſeeing

Iſa. 58. 1.

the Proclamation of God's praiſes upon Earth, tends to the propagation of them, ſo as it is not in Heaven.

And truly, he that is good at this, is good indeed. He is no Hypocrite; for he is a ſelf-denying man, and one that loves God far above himſelf, one that lives in God, and delights in him, and gives him the higheſt place in his heart. Do what you can therefore this way, and it will redound to a ſingular evidence of your ſincerity.

2. Endeavour alſo the Propagation of Chriſt's Kingdom; pray for it, and according to your capacity promove it.

Pſal. 72. 15 You may remember what is written, *Pſal.* 72.15. where it is ſaid of *Solomon* in the Type, and of Chriſt in the Truth, *He ſhall live, and to him ſhall be given of the Gold of Sheba, Prayer alſo ſhall be made for him, and daily ſhall he be praiſed.* Why? muſt we pray for Jeſus Chriſt? yes, by all means. Of all that we pray for, we muſt be ſure to pray for Jeſus Chriſt, but not conſidered perſonally, but Myſtically. You know how the people, and the children prayed for Chriſt, when they cryed, ſaying, *Ho-*

Mat. 21. 9. *ſanna to the Son of David; Bleſſed is he*

that

that cometh in the Name of the Lord; Hoſanna in the higheſt. The words are taken out of the 118th *Pſal. ver.* 25, 26. They cryed, ſaying, *Hoſanna*, that is, *Save, I beſeech thee.* It is as much as, *God ſave the King, ſend now proſperity.* It is meant eſpecially of Chriſt as King, Chriſt and his Kingdom. And we never ſay, *Thy Kingdom come*, but thus we pray for Chriſt, who prayeth for us every day, or elſe we ſhould be in a very ſad caſe.

And truly, if the Kingdom of Chriſt be within us, we ſhall be very ſollicitous and active for the Kingdom of Chriſt without us, which Kingdom of his this day is in a very low condition, as to the profeſſed power and purity of the Goſpel. And, yet if we can do little or nothing elſe, yet we may pray for the Kingdom of Chriſt. Let us therefore lay the ſtate thereof to heart this day. How often do the Saints under the Old Teſtament, pray for the Kingdom of our Lord Jeſus under the New? ſay they, *God be merciful to us, and bleſs us, and cauſe his face to ſhine upon us; That thy way may be known upon Earth, thy ſaving health among all Nations*, &c. Pſal. 67, 1, 2.

Mark ye, That ſingular bleſſing, which

which God commanded *Aaron* and his Sons to pronounce upon the people of *Israel*, *The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee.* The godly in *David's* time turned it into prayer for the enlarging of the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus under the Gospel, accounting it a great blessing to themselves, to have it enlarged by the accession of the *Gentiles*; though (yet) it was to be accomplished in the rejection of the *Jews*; but it is (as if we should say) Let God do what he pleaseth with a Nation, so that his Gospel may be propagated, and his Kingdom enlarged in the World. If God's way may be known upon Earth, and his saving health among all other Nations, We should account that the Lord is merciful to us, and blesseth us, and causeth his face to shine upon us; We should love the Kingdom of Christ above all the Kingdoms in the World, and *That it shall come to pass in the last dayes, that the Mountain of the Lords house shall be established upon the top of the Mountains, and exalted above the Hills, and that all Nations shall flow unto it.* You know what great *heavi-*

Numb. 6. 24. 25.

Isa. 2, 2.

vines

vineſs and continual ſorrow of heart Paul *had for his Brethren the Jews, and kinſmen according to the fleſh*; and yet he *magnified his Office*, in that he was the *Apoſtle of the Gentiles*. That is, he accounted it to be a glorious Office to be a Preacher to the *Gentiles*. So that, Let the Kingdom of the Lord Jeſus come, whatſoever become of any Kingdom, or of all the Kingdoms under Heaven. Rom. 9. 2, 3. Rom. 11. 13.

Thirdly, Live exemplarily, that your paterns may ſurvive you, and live when you are dead. Thus *Paul* lived, *Brethren*, ſaith he, *be followers together of me, and mark them which walk ſo, as ye have us for an enſample*. And he denied himſelf, to make himſelf an example to others. *You know*, ſaith he, *how ye ought to follow us* (*viz.* in orderly walking in your particular Callings) *for we behaved not our ſelves diſorderly among you, neither did we eat any mans bread for nought, but wrought with labour and travel night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you. Not becauſe we have not power* (that is, right to be maintained at your charge) *but to make our ſelves an enſample unto you, to follow us*. And thus alſo he did unto the *Corinthians*. For thus did Chriſt 3. Phil. 3. 17. 2 Theſ. 3. 7, 8, 9. 1 Cor. 9. 4. —16. with 11. 1.

Christ deny himself to give us an example, *Joh.* 13. 14, 15. *If I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one anothers feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.* Consider also, 2 *Cor.* 8. 9. *For ye know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.* And when *Paul* took his leave of the Elders of *Ephesus*, who were never like to see his face more, he leaves his example with them; *I have*, (saith he) *coveted no mans Silver, or Gold, or Apparel; Yea, you your selves know, that these hands have ministred unto my necessities, and to them that were with me; I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring, ye ought to support the weak.* — The like did *Samuel.* Thus also *David* left his example behind him, for God set him up for a patern to all succeeding Kings in *Israel*, whose Life and Reign God therefore measureth by their care to follow him, as you may read frequently in the Books of the *Kings* and *Chronicles*. For of such & such Kings it is said, They walked in the ways of *David*; and of others, that they did not so

2 Cor. 8. 9.

Acts 20. 33, 34, 35.

1 Sam. 12. 2, 3.

ſo walk. Examples are very prevalent *in utramque partem*, either one way or t'other, either for good or evil.

And therefore ſo walk according to God, that others may follow you, ſeeing your example will live whileſt you live, yea, and when you are dead too. For it will be ſaid, ſuch a one lived thus, and walked thus, and thus he behaved himſelf in his family, and thus in his fellowſhip with the Saints, and thus in his dealings with his neighbours, and with all men; and thus he carried it under his tryals and oppoſitions in an evil day, and this and that was the Rule he walked by. For he was a wiſe Man, or ſhe was a wiſe Woman, and very conſciencious, and tender-hearted, and ſincere, and active, and ſtirring, and zealous for Jeſus Chriſt, and fearful to give the leaſt offence, and ready to every good work, and pitiful to the poor Saints, his Heart, and Purſe, and Houſe were open for Jeſus Chriſt. And he was a juſt and peaceable Man, and one that could govern his Spirit, and Tongue, and that could keep down his paſſions, and one that was a mortified perſon, dead to the world, and the things thereof, &c. Now, what a bleſſed

ex-

example is this? and what a glorious report? what an edifying patern, and for the glory of God, and our Lord Jesus Christ? Yea, this example will preach your funeral Sermon, (you need no other to do it) and it will keep you alive when you are dead, and immortalize you upon Earth, make you of blessed memory indeed, and to be had with the righteous in everlasting remembrance; when the names of others shall be written in the Earth, which will soon be obliterated, and quite blotted out; and when it shall be said of them as of *Hezekiah's* Father, by way of reproach, *This is that King Ahaz.* And such a good example many have left behind them, and we are ever and anon speaking of such as these are, whose names are as a precious Oyntment, and which were embalmed when they dyed, with the Graces, Vertues, and good Works of their Lives, that still they send forth a sweet savour to surviving posterity. And thus was that good Womans name embalmed, who poured out a very precious Oyntment on the Head of Christ against his burial. *Verily*, saith Christ, *wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also*

2 Cor. 8. 23.

Mat. 26. 13

also this, that this Woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her. So that this good Woman is still alive in her memory, and she hath thus lived these 1600 years and more, and shall never dye so long as the world standeth. And such another Acts. 36. was *Tabitha.* And the like I may say of many more, whose names are recorded in holy Writ, who obtained a good report, and though they are now dead, Heb. 11. yet still they both speak, and are spoken of. 2, 4.

Brethren, will ye think upon these things; And will ye now study & endeavour to live exemplarily, and to live lives for posterity, and so to live converting lives, and convincing, and edifying lives; yea, and to live the lives of such, as must be the world's Judges? And will it not be greatly to the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to your Eternal Consolation, to hear of your lives and examples in that great day of Christ's appearance, when your examples shall have their resurrection as well as your bodies, when Christ shall produce your paterns before all the world, and convince and judge the ungodly world by them? As if he should say to those on his left hand, who lived in your dayes,

and

and ſaw your examples; 'Loe, do you 'ſee theſe Men and Women on my right 'hand, who lived thus and thus in your 'ſight, and gave you a bleſſed example, 'which either you cenſured, or were 'unwilling to follow; they lived and 'converſed in direct oppoſition to you; 'they lived ſo and ſo, when you did 'thus and thus: Therefore they ſhall 'be your Judges.

Methinks I cannot ſpeak enough of this Subject, which is of very great moment, *viz.* the tranſmiſſion and recommendation of paterns to poſterity, as one grieved, that I can ſee no more of it, but rather ſuch a common and ordinary kind of walking, as hath little or nothing of ſingularity in it.

Alas! How few, that profeſs the fear of God this day, are writing of Copies for poſterity to walk by? And where is ſingularity of life to be ſeen? Yea, how many are there among the Profeſſors of the Goſpel, by whoſe failings we may learn more than by their Vertues? and this I ſpeak to my grief; Oh, *let your light ſo ſhine before Men, that they may ſee your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven.* Jeſus Chriſt there ſpeaks of the light of

Mat. 5. 16.

good

good works and good examples, which are visible to standers-by, and such as do occasion them to glorifie our Heavenly Father.

And know thus much also, That Men live much by example, either on the one side or other. And where good examples are given, God expecteth that others should follow them, and that not only the examples of the living, but of the * dead also. For what saith the Apostle? *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God, whose Faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.* The Apostle there speaketh of such as had been their Guides, but were now dead; for the words in the Original are *not*, *remember them that have the rule over you*, but, *remember your Rulers*, *i. e.* Ministers of the Gospel, who are now with the Lord. And he exhorts the *Hebrews* not to forget their Faith, and holy lives, who had no other end in their conversations and good examples, but God's Glory, and the Salvation of them that beheld them.

* *Such are often recommended*, Heb. 12.1. Jam. 5.10. Heb. 13.7.

Μνημονεύετε τῶν ἡγουμένων ὑμῶν.

But I must pass from this Particular, though somewhat loth to leave it, and should much rejoyce, if what I have said

of it, may take place in all your hearts and lives.

Live exemplarily, that your paterns may outlive you, and edifie others when you are dead. And this is a work which cannot be done in Heaven. And take heed of ſcandals and viſible infirmities, which edifie beholders to ruine. For there is a ſinful miſchievous edification, of which the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, 1 *Cor.* 8.10. *For if any Man ſee thee, which haſt knowledge, ſit at meat in the Idols Temple: Shall not the Conſcience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat thoſe things which are offered to Idols?* The word rendred, *Emboldened*, is Edified in the Original. You may ſo live in your Examples, that you may edifie and teach beholders to ſin in following them, as *Jeroboam* the ſon of *Nebat* did, who made *Iſrael* to ſin. And many that profeſs to the Goſpel, do ſo live and walk, the Conſideration whereof is very ſad and miſerable. O beware of giving ſuch examples, for they will diminiſh your glory in Heaven, if you ſhall be ſo happy, at leaſt, as to arrive there. But ſo much for this 3d Particular.

1 Cor. 8. 10.

οἰκοδομηθήσεται.

4. Embrace and improve all opportunities of appearing and ſpeaking for Chriſt

(another

(another ſervice peculiar to the Saints on Earth, who cannot ſpeak a word for Chriſt in Heaven.) And many ſuch ſeaſons are providentially adminiſtred to us, *viz.* ſometimes of reproving ſin, both in ſuch as fear God, and ſuch as fear him not. In the Scriptures you find the Saints reproving one another; *Moſes* reproveth *Aaron*, and *Nathan David*, and *Hanani Aſa*, & his ſon *Jehu Jehoſhaphat*, and *Paul Peter*, and one private Brother another. And how often alſo do the Saints in Scripture reprove the wicked and ungodly? I need not give you Inſtances for that. It is not enough *that we have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs, but we muſt alſo reprove them.* We muſt appear for Chriſt, his Truth, his Rules, and Glory; or where is our love to him? Sometimes you ſhall hear curſing, and ſwearing in your preſence, ſometimes reproaching, ſlandering, filthineſs, fooliſh talking, and ſinful jeſting; ſometimes you ſhall ſee Covetouſneſs, Pride, Paſſion, Anger, and uncomely Language, and ſometimes inordinate affections, and ſomtimes groſs omiſſions of duty either to God or Man. Here now are opportunities of doing a ſervice for Chriſt, and of appearing and

Exod. 32. 21. 2 Sam. 12. 1 Chron. 16.—19. 2 Gal. 2. 11. Lev. 19. 17. Mat. 18. 15 Epheſ. 5. 11.

witnessing for him, so as you cannot do hereafter in glory. In such cases therefore consider your duty, and what the Lord requireth of you, who will take it very ill, if you have never a Tongue for him. And do not say, I am loth, or I am afraid to speak, and it will be ill taken, or I shall do no good by testifying, or I shall be accounted a busie-body; but attend your duty, and leave the event to God; only beg Wisdom, which is profitable to direct: And however a Reproof take, or speed, yet you have done a better service for Christ, than any Saint in Heaven can do. I know, indeed, that such testimonies for Christ are seldom well taken, but that ariseth from the pride of Man, and however, that must not hinder your duty, for I am sure, that the with-holding such testimonies, when you are called to give them, is very ill taken by Christ; and if he take them well, let proud spirits take them as ill as they please.

The like I may say as to the opposing of Error and Heresies, according to your capacities, and of informing and instructing the ignorant, when a season is offered, and of warning the unruly, &c. And you know not, but you may do much

much good in ſuch caſes, and your work may live when you are dead; however your reward is with the Lord, for whom you have performed this ſervice.

5. There are other good and gracious Offices to be diſcharged, which ceaſe when you are dead. I did briefly mention ſome of them in the Doctrinal part. Let me now exhort you to attend them alſo; As to pray one for another, which Duty ends with our Lives. For (as I have ſaid) God will have but one Interceſſor in Heaven, but here he requireth many. Here we may, yea muſt be trading one with another, *viz.* Prayers for Prayers, Miniſters with people, and people with their Miniſters, and one Saint with another: Not but that we muſt pray for others alſo. 1 Tim. 2. 1. Jam. 5. 16.

Oh! what a trade did *Paul* drive this way? I have ſometimes thought, what a Catalogue of Churches and Saints he had to commend to God in his daily prayers. How many Churches did he uſually pray for? ſaith he to the Church at *Rome*, *God is my witneſs, that without ceaſing I make mention of you always in my prayers.* The like for the Church at *Epheſus*, ſaith he, *I ceaſe not to give* Rom. 1. 9. Eph. 1. 16.

give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers. So for the Church at
Col. 1. 3. Phil. 1. 3, 4. *Philippi*, saith he, *I remember you always in every prayer of mine for you all, making request with joy.* And thus too, he saith, he prayed for the Church at *Colossus.*
1 Thes. 1. 2, 3. The very same for the Church at *Thessalonica, We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembring without ceasing, your work of Faith, labour of Love, and patience of Hope in our Lord Jesus Christ*--
And doubtless, had he written Epistles to all other Churches, we should have heard of his prayers for them. Neither did he pray only for Churches, but also for several Saints in particular; For he
2 Tim. 1. 3. saith, that he prayed for *Timothy night and day*; that is, Morning and Evening, the whole put for the part. And
Philem. v. 4 as for *Philemon*, he saith, *That he made mention of him always in his prayers.* What a Catalogue then had *Paul* of Churches and Saints to recommend to God in his daily prayers? For it is very likely, that he prayed for many more, than we find in his Epistles.

And as he prayed for the Churches, so he desireth to be remembred in their prayers. For, as I said, he drove a holy

trade

trade this way. He begs the prayers of the Church at *Rome*, in the very Language of a Begger for an Alms. *Now I beſeech you, Brethren, for the Lord Jeſus Chriſt's ſake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye ſtrive together with me, in your prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered.* —So of the Church at *Epheſus*, and of the *Philippians*, and of the *Coloſſians*, and of the *Theſſalonians*, and of the *Hebrews*; (for the greateſt Apoſtle had need of the prayers of the meaneſt Chriſtian) only he begs no prayers of the Church at *Corinth*, in his firſt Epiſtle to them, as looking upon them under many and great offences, for which he there reproves them: Nor of the Churches of *Galatia*, whom he look't upon as greatly backſliden from the Faith: And he would not trade with broken men. But here you ſee, I have given you a notable example for your imitation in this Point. Pray therefore for one another, and trade together as you ſhall ſee occaſion. Yea, you muſt pray ſometimes for ſuch as never deſired it. So likewiſe, if you do hear of the afflicted condition of ſuch and ſuch of the Saints, ſuppoſe in great poverty, or in priſon upon the account of Chriſt, and a

Rom. 15. 30,31.
Ephes. 5. 18,19.
Phil. 1. 19
Col. 4. 3.
1 Theſ. 5. 25.
Heb. 13. 18.

good Conſcience, or in ſome great diſtreſs otherwiſe, or under ſickneſs, and in danger of death, look upon your ſelves as obliged to put up one Prayer for them. You know what the Apoſtle ſaith, *Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them, and them which ſuffer adverſity, as being your ſelves alſo in the body.* *Remember* them; How? To ſympathize with them, to pray for them, and (to your power) to help and relieve them.

Heb. 13. 3.

And think it not enough, that you pray for Saints, but perform the like ſervice for ſinners alſo; for your prayers may contribute much to their converſion, as Chriſt's prayer, *Luke* 23. 34. did to the converſion of many that were his enemies, *Acts* 2. and *Stephens* prayer (probably) was heard in the converſion of *Paul*.

And be ſure to pray for Children, and Childrens Children, that they may live in the ſight of God, and bear up his Name in their generations.

Neither reſt in particular perſons, but pray alſo for the Churches of Chriſt this day, in whom he is ſo much concerned, as exerciſing his ſpecial Government in and over them. Pray therefore

for

for their peace and purity, and progress in holiness, and that they may be edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and comfort of the Holy Ghost, be multiplyed. And this is to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. And when you hear of a Church bereft of its Pastor, pray to the chief Shepherd, to supply the empty room with a meet successour: As *Moses* said in another case, *Let the Lord, the God of the Spirits of all flesh, set a man over the Congregation, which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in, that the Congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no Shepherd.*

Acts 9.31. Psal. 122.6. Numb. 27. 16, 17.

Oh sirs! There is a great service to be done for Christ by prayers, during the opportunity of our intercession, which dieth together with us. What great things have been, and still are done by prayers? By these was the Church delivered out *of Babylon*, and *Peter out of Prison*. By these was *Zion built*. By these is the Gospel upheld, the enemies thereof bridled, and liberty obtained, &c. And when God will do great and wonderful things, he will gather his praying Saints together,

Jer. 29. 12, 13. Act. 12. 5— Psal. 102. 16, 17. Psal. 50. 5.

and

and pour out a mighty Spirit of prayer upon them.

6. Sixthly, *Comfort the feeble minded, and ſupport the weak. Speak a word in due ſeaſon to the weary.* For ſometimes you ſhall meet with ſuch as want it, and who walk in darkneſs and ſee no light, and are ready to complain like *Heman*, Pſal. 88. at large. In ſuch caſes, *Strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees, and ſay to them that are of a fearful heart, be ſtrong, fear not.* And this (it ſeems) was *Jobs* practice. *He ſtrengthened the weak, and his words upheld him that was falling.* And if they were in affliction, *the moving of his lips aſſwaged their grief.* For, *heavineſs in the heart of man maketh it ſtoop, but a good word maketh it glad.* And this ſavoureth ſweetly of the Spirit of Chriſt, *who would not break the bruiſed Reed, nor quench the ſmoaking Flax.* The words are diminutive, for the meaning is, he would ſtrengthen the bruiſed Reed, and blow up the ſmoaking Flax. For he carries his Lambs in his boſom, that is, he tenders them, and laies them near his heart.

1 Theſ. 5. 14.

Iſa. 35. 3, 4.

Job 4. 3, 4.

Prov. 12. 4 25.

Iſa. 50 4.

Mat. 12. 12

As when the Church was in affliction, and *ſick of love, he ſtayes her with flagons*

Song 2. 5, 7

gons, and comforts her with Apples; his left hand is under her head, and his right hand embraceth her. Not his right hand under her head, and his left hand embraceth her; for that is not next the heart of Christ. He is our *High Priest, who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, & hath compassion on us in just proportion.* He speaks to the heart of the trembling *Hæmorrhois*, when she fell down at his feet, and saith unto her, *Daughter be of good comfort, thy Faith hath made thee whole, go in peace.* And he takes part with that brokenhearted sinner that sate behind him at his feet, weeping, and washing, and wiping, and kissing them, and rebukes censorious *Simon*; and saith to her, *Thy sins are forgiven, thy Faith hath saved thee, go in peace.* Oh the sweet Spirit of Christ! *Let the same mind then be in you which was in him.* And *comfort them that are in trouble, with the comforts wherewith you your selves have been comforted of God; And be kindly affectioned one toward another in brotherly love.* And when the case requires it, shew your self a son of Consolation.

Heb. 4. 15. with 5. 2.

Luke. 7. 48.

Luke 7. 40.

Phil. 2. 5.

2 Cor. 1. 3.

Rom. 12. 10.

Seventhly,

7. Seventhly, In Heaven (you know) are no neceſſities, whereas here are many, which will give occaſion therefore to ſuch ſervice as Heaven hath no need of. For here are poor Saints, and the poor are always with us, who ſometimes want Food, ſometimes Clothing, ſometimes Lodging, ſometimes Money, &c. You then that are able muſt follow *Job's* example; ſaith he, *I have not with-held the poor from their deſire, nor cauſed the eyes of the Widow to fail, nor eaten my morſel alone, but the Fatherleſs hath eaten of it alſo. Neither have I ſeen any to periſh for want of clothing, or any poor without covering, but his loynes have bleſſed me, and he was warmed with the fleece of my ſheep. The ſtranger did not lodge in the ſtreet, but I opened my door to the Traveller*, &c. and the eyes of our Lord Jeſus are much upon ſuch good works as theſe; for he *beheld how the people caſt their money into the Treaſury.* Heaven affordeth no ſuch objects of your Love and Compaſſion.

Job 31.16, —21.

Mat. 25.35

There are indeed many Beggers at Heavens Gates, but never a Begger within Heavens doors. And there are many Widows and Fatherleſs Children here, but never a Widow nor Orphan there. Brethren!

Brethren, *Be ye then merciful, as your Father in Heaven is merciful.* And *blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.* And it is that which will lengthen out your lives. Mercy, even to the bruit-creatures, shall prolong your dayes, much more then to Men, especially to *the houshold of Faith.* *Lazarus* shall rise, and have a new lease of his life to entertain Christ again. And so shall *Tabitha* to make Coats and Garments for Widows again. Life is well bestowed upon merciful ones. And life is the time of acting this Grace, for bowels are shut up in Heaven, and no pity shall be shewed to the neareſt perishing relations in the day of Christ. Again, Here you may entertain Jesus Christ in his Members, and Ministers. Here you may be fellow-helpers to the Truth and Gospel. And what says *John* of that? *We ought therefore to receive such, that we might be fellow-helpers to the Truth.*

Luke 6.36. Mat. 5.7. Deut. 22.7. Gal. 6. 10. Joh. 11. 2. Act. 9. 3 Joh. v. 8.

And, saith the Apostle, *Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained Angels unawares.* We cannot entertain Angels in Heaven, (for they have their places there as well as we, and there we are rather entertained by them, *Zech.* 3. 7.) but here it hath been

Heb. 13. 2.

been done, as by *Abraham* and *Lot*. And though we cannot expect to entertain them as they did, yet, (if we
Mat. 24. 40 could) what is that to the entertainment of Christ himself? And if we entertain his Members at our houses, or do any Office of Love for them, we do it unto Jesus Christ.

8. Eighthly, Let us be willing also (if need be) to suffer for Christ, which is a service peculiar to this life. But I say, *If need be*, because we are not to cast our selves upon suffering, uncalled. We must take up, but not make a Cross. But when the providence of God, and his Word calleth us to witness for Christ to the loss of ought that is nearest and dearest to us, let us remember, that this is one of the services, which terminateth with our lives, and cannot be performed in glory. It hath indeed been our portion hitherto to escape those sufferings, which many of our brethren have undergone. But have we been sufferers in affection? Have we been prepared for the Cross? Or, have we not been among the fearful? And have we sympathized with our Brethren in their sufferings? and have we accounted them happy that have endured, yea, and their sufferings honourable

honourable for the ſake, and in the quarrel of ſuch a Lord and Maſter? Conſider what I ſay: For it is a very honourable thing to ſuffer for Chriſt, his Gospel, and Kingdom, *For the Spirit of God, and of glory reſteth upon all ſuch.* 1 Pet. 4. 14. And what are *all the ſufferings of this preſent time, in compariſon with the glory which ſhall be revealed in us?* Rom. 8. 18. But though we have eſcaped what others have undergone, yet we know not what may be our portion, as to ſuffering before we dye. Perhaps there is the more behind. God hath appointed the number of them that ſhall ſuffer for Chriſt. Rev. 6. 11. And who knows what God hath appointed for him this way? But what ever it be, Heaven will put an end to it, where are no ſufferings but Crowns, even incorruptible Crowns of glory. You know what is ſaid of them *that came out of great tribulation, they were clothed with white Robes, and had palms in their hands.* Rev. 7. 9.

Ninthly, Exerciſe thoſe fruits of the Spirit, which are proper to this life. You have heard of ſeveral, as Faith, Hope, Patience, love to Enemies, and to Men out of Chriſt, Sympathy, common gifts for Edification, Communication 9.

nication of Knowledge, which is mediate in this life.

All these are the gifts of the Spirit on this side Heaven, in the exercise whereof God is much glorified, and others edified, which is that which should be the scope and aime of us all.

10. Tenthly, and lastly, There is one thing more, which we are exhorted to do in this world, which cannot be done after death, and it is a very great service, and highly incumbent on us, and I was willing to reserve it to the last place, that it might the rather abide by us; and t is this, Endeavour to transmit pure Religion and undefiled to posterity, by commending it to your Children. *The Fathers to the Children shall make known thy truth.* And we may run it through Fatherhood at large. But

1. Let me speak of Domestical Fathers, that is, Fathers of Families. This is a great matter, and is the special work of the godly in their generations. How else shall that be made good, which is written; *His Name* (that is, Christ's) Psal. 72:17 *shall endure for ever, his Name shall be continued as long as the Sun.* Some render it, *His Nam shall be continued as a son continueth his Father's name,* for the Original

ginal *Finnon*, or *Fanin* cometh of *Nin*, a *ſon*. As if one ſhould ſay, *Filiabitur nomen ejus*, or *ſoboleſcet nomen ejus*, as *Tremellius* renders it; That is, Chriſt ſhall not only himſelf live for ever in his perſon, but his Name alſo ſhall endure for ever, and be derived to his Children, who therefore ſhall *prolong his days*, (as Children mete out their Fathers mortality) in bearing his name, being called *Chriſtians*, and *the ſons of God*, and *the Children of Chriſt*. And this ſhall be (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) before the Sun, that is, as long as the Sun endureth. Iſa. 53. 10. Acts 11. 26 Heb. 2. 13.

Now God will uſe means to bring this to paſs, and what are thoſe means? one ſpecial one is this, *The Father to the Children ſhall make known thy Truth.* For how ſhould the Name of Chriſt be *childed* from generation to generation, (as ſome render it) if care be not taken by Parents to *Child* Chriſt's Name downwards to their Off-ſpring; that his Name may be put upon their Children, by being not only Chriſtians by Baptiſm, but by Regeneration. And this is one of the great works and ends of our lives; for *Hezekiah* here mentioneth, Firſt, Praiſing of God, and Secondly, Making

known the Truth to our Children; which was a great Statute in *Israel*, and obligeth us no less then them: saith the Psalmist, *I will open my mouth in a Parable, I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known, and our Fathers have told us: We will not hide them from their Children, shewing to the generations to come, the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.* Here

Psal. 78. 2, 3, 4.

1. Are such as are worthy of the name of Fathers, *viz.* who transmit to posterity the Truths of God contained in the Scripture, so as these here did, as appears in the sequel of the Psalm. And

2. Here is the only infallible sort of Tradition, *viz.* that which delivereth to posterity, what God first delivered to the Prophets, Apostles, and holy men of God, and is now contained in the Scriptures.

3. From these words we are taught, that the godly in every age ought to have the same care to transmit the Word of Truth to their posterity, as their Ancestors had to transfer it unto them; and so to pay the debt which they owe to their godly Ancestors, unto their succeeding Children: for our Children are

here

here called their Children, *verſ.* 4th. And if you deſcended not from ſuch Parents immediately, yet (peradventure) mediately you did. However, this here is your duty, out of love to God, to Truth, and your Poſterity. Mark therefore what followeth in the ſame Pſalm. *For God eſtabliſhed a Teſtimony in Jacob, and appointed a Law in Iſrael, which he commanded our Fathers, that they ſhould make them known to their Children, that the generation to come might know them, even the Children which ſhould be born, who ſhould ariſe and declare them unto their Children.* You ſee this tranſmitting of the Truth and true Religion to Poſterity, is God's love and Teſtimony, becauſe it teſtifieth and witneſſeth for God, and againſt us, if we break it. And this Law and Teſtimony we have ſeveral times in *Moſes*. So that the Law and Teſtimony is, to tranſmit the Truth to Poſterity. For God did not deliver the Truth, and true Religion to a perſon or people for the uſe of themſelves alone, but for the benefit of their Children alſo: And he never loved the Truth truly, who is careleſs, whether it dye with himſelf, or out-live him.

Ver. 5, 6.

Exod. 12. 26, 27. — 13. 14. Deut. 4. 9. — 6. 9. Joſh. 4. 6, 7

Let such Parents and Masters look to it, who have been negligent in instructing their Children and Families. The handing of Religion from Parents to Children, & from the Living to the next succeeding Age, is a standing part of our Generation-work. It is said of *David*, Act. 13.36 *That after he had served his generation, he fell asleep.* And truly, such as fall asleep before, go to bed before they have done their work, and that is the way to make them start, as many do, when they are newly setting themselves to sleep.

Oh sirs! care and pains for the godly being of posterity, is a great and necessary business. I many times think of the care and endeavour of the nine Tribes Josh. 22.22 —30. and half, lest their Children should lose their interest in the God of *Israel*. To which end they built the Altar *Ed*, as they tell the two Tribes and half in their Apology. Say they, *The Lord, God of Gods, The Lord, God of Gods he knoweth, and Israel he shall know that we have not done it in rebellion, to turn from following the Lord, &c. But we have done it rather for fear of this thing, lest in time to come your Children might speak unto our Children, saying, What have you to do with the Lord God of Israel? For the Lord*

Lord hath made Jordan a border between us and you; ye Children of Reuben, and Children of Gad, ye have no part in the Lord: So ſhall your Children make our Children ceaſe from fearing the Lord: Therefore we ſaid, Let us now prepare to build us an Altar, not for burnt-offering, nor for Sacrifice, but that it may be a witneſs between us and you, and our generations after us, that we might do the ſervice of the Lord before him with our Burnt-offerings & our Sacrifices, and with our Peace-offerings, that your Children might not ſay to our Children in time to come, ye have no part in the Lord, &c. Here you ſee the care and endeavour of the two Tribes and half for the preſervation of the true Religion, and way of God's Worſhip among their poſterity, which is the Point that I am now preſſing. I beſeech you lay it to heart; for I fear that many are guilty in this matter, and that poſterity is like to be little beholding to them. Admit of a few Expoſtulations, and conſider,

What will your Children and Servants ſay, when they come to ſucceed you, and peradventure dye at laſt in their ſins?

"Lord, our Parents and Maſters did

"not make known the Truth to us; "they did not Catechize and Inſtruct "us; they did not deliver to us the "form of ſound words, nor any brief "ſum of the Articles of Faith, and true "Religion; but we lived and dyed in "ignorance, for they had no care of "our Souls; and if others dealt thus "with their Children and Servants, Re-"ligion it ſelf might have periſhed, as "we have done. Now would not this be moſt miſerable? And are you willing to be thus indited by your Children and Servants in that great day.

2. Doth not *Hezekiah* here ſay, *The Father to the Children ſhall make known thy Truth*? And is it not expreſt as a duty, and a great one too? And doth not *Hezekiah* look upon this as one of the great works to be attended in this World, without which it is not worth while to live? *Hezekiah* indeed had no ſon at this time, but he reſolveth here, that if God ſhall give him one, he will make known the Truth and Faithfulneſs of God to him; for he looks upon it as his duty, when he ſaith, *The Father to the Children ſhall make known thy Truth.* And what is the reaſon, that many

many are so ignorant this day, but because they wanted Family-instruction from Parents and Masters? For it is not enough, that such do live under the preaching of the Gospel, if they want instruction in the Families wherein they have lived; the want whereof makes the Ministers Plow to go so heavily. Oh let not your Children and Servants rise up in judgment against you, and charge their ignorance and damnation upon the neglect of your duty towards them.

Thirdly, Consider with whom God hath betrusted the Gospel and true Religion. 3.

1. He puts his Ministers in trust with it. For, saith the Apostle, *We are allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel.* And it is a great trust, and we must be faithful in the discharge of it; and you must not be offended if we deal plainly with you. 1 Thes. 2. 4

2. He betrusteth all his people with his Gospel and pure Religion, expecting their discharge of this trust by their utmost endeavors to transmit it to posterity, as you heard but even now from that Text, *Psalm* 78. 3, —7. For he doth not, as I said, put the trust into your

hands for your ſelves only, that you ſhould make uſe of it during your lives, and then dye, and let others that ſhall come after you ſhift for themſelves; for this were to be cruel, like the *Oſtriches* in the Wilderneſs, who leave their Eggs in the Earth, and warm them in the duſt, forgetting that the Foot may cruſh them, and the wild Beaſt break them; but he expecteth and requireth your faithfulneſs, and utmoſt care and labour to recommend the ſame Religion to your Children and Servants that live with you. And what ſaith *Solomon*? *My Father taught me*, and ſaid thus and thus to me, *Prov.* 4. 4. And my Mother alſo taught me, and ſhe ſaid ſo and ſo to me, *Prov.* 31. – But how have you taught thoſe that are under your care? and what have you ſaid to them? And where is the Altar *Ed*, that you have built for them, as a witneſs and memorial of the true Religion and Worſhip of God, which you have commended to them? No marvel that Religion decayeth in many Families, when their Governours have wrapt up their Religion in a Napkin, and profeſſed only for themſelves, and not for them that ſhould come after them. You that are guilty in this part,

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will have a ſad reckoning to make, when you ſhall be called to give an account of your diſcharge of that truſt, which is commended to you, and have never an *Ed* to witneſs your care of conveying the Truth to the generation to come. Know therefore, that it is your duty, according to this truſt committed to you, to turn and wind your Religion for God's Glory & the advantage of poſterity; which, if you neglect, take heed you be not numbred among the wicked, and ſlothful ſervants, and have your portion with them.

Conſider the common care of Parents to bequeath their Houſes, Lands, and Goods to ſuch as are to ſucceed them. *They leave their ſubſtance to their Babes*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt. *And the inward thought is, that their houſes ſhall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations, and they call their Lands after their own names.* That is, they are thoughtful for the upholding of their Families, and the continuing of their names from one generation to another. But as for the Goſpel, which they profeſs, and the Religion which they own, they have little or no care at all. They leave their Earthly ſubſtance 4. Pſal. 17. 14 Pſal. 49. 12

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to their Children, but that which is the most substantial thing of all, they leave it not to them; and they leave their names to their Children, but the Name of God and Christ they leave not, nor have they any care, that Christ's Name be named upon them, by endeavouring to make them Christians indeed, according to their duty, as the Psalmist
Psal. 45. ult. Psal. 72. 17 faith, *I will make thy Name to be remembred in all generations.* They care not that his Name should be *childed* from generation to generation. Truly it were just with God, that their names should be blotted out from under Heaven, who love their own names better than Christ's.

5. Consider the Covenant that pious Parents are entred into with God.
Gen. 17. 7. For when God saith, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy Seed*; He expecteth and requireth, that Parents do not only give up themselves, but their Seed also unto God. As *Hannah* said in her
1 Sam. 1. 11. prayer, *If thou wilt give unto thine Handmaid a Man-child, I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life:* She spake indeed of more then an ordinary devoting him to the Lord, *viz.* in the way of *Nazariteship*: But yet she

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bound however, to have given him back to the Lord, in and by an ordinary way of dedication, common to her ſelf with all Parents, who are bound to this duty by the Law of Nature, and by many commands in the Word of God, which I have already mentioned. *Train up* therefore *a Child* (or Catechize him) *in the way he ſhould go.* So did *David* deal with *Solomon*, as you have heard, and ſo *Lois with Eunice*, and *Eunice with Timothy*, and ſo the godly Fathers in their generations. It was as you have heard, a Teſtimony and a Law in *Iſrael.* And when you brought your Children to Baptiſm, you did ſolemly engage unto this duty. For the Covenant which gave your Children right to that Ordinance, and which ſealed it to them, ſtrongly obliged you to give them up to God in the uſe of all ſuch means as he hath appointed.

Prov. 22 6. 2 Tim. 1. 5. Pſal. 44. 1. —78. 3.—

And therefore you are a Covenant-breaker in the neglect of this duty, which is the ruine both of many Children and Families, as of *Elie's* in particular, and yet *Eli* did reprove his ſons, but did not do his utmoſt. And this is the reaſon why many Children of godly Parents prove lewd and vicious, and

1 Sam. 2. 23. with 3. 13.

their

their Families at last, lose all power of godliness, if they grow not loose and prophane. For it is with Children, as with the Flowers in your Gardens, which without care and culture will soon degenerate. Remember therefore your Covenant, and attend the terms thereof, which concern you in relation to your posterity. And say, I am not only naturally, but also federally bound to use all means to train up my Children in the nurture, and admonition of the Lord, and to serve the purpose of God as to their Eternal Salvation.

For do you think it enough, that you breed them up to live in this world? And is it enough that you provide Meat, and Drink, and Apparel, Portions, and Trades, and ways of livelihood for them? Or, that you give them civil Education, and teach them how to carry themselves as men? will you love their bodies, and neglect their souls? Do you know the price of your own souls, and not of theirs too? Or, are not theirs as precious as yours? Or, is it all one to you where you spend your Eternity, and whether you go to Heaven or Hell? In the mean-while, where is your Religion? where your love of God, and Godli-

Godlineſs? Where your Conſcience as to your Covenant? Or what care have you, that Godlineſs may flouriſh in the next generation, who take not the courſe that it may thrive in your own Family? Take heed leſt you prove to be an Hypocrite at laſt. Oh, remember the care of good *Manoah*, when the Angel told him, he ſhould have a ſon; *But*, ſaith he, *How ſhall we order the Child? and what ſhall we do unto him?* Judg. 13. 12.

And ſeeing you are a Covenanter with God, and have given up your Children to him, who hath accepted of them, and ſealed the Covenant to them; you ſhould now conſider, that they *are his Children*, his Sons and Daughters, as well as yours, as he expreſly calleth them. And he puts them out to you to Board and Breeding, and you muſt give an acount to him, how you have bred them up for him. Ezek. 16. 20, 21.

And what? will ye rob God of his Children, and beſtow them upon the world, or ſacrifice them to be devoured, and cauſe them to paſs through the fire, as God challengeth thoſe Parents in the aforeſaid place of *Ezekiel*. I mean to be devoured of that roaring Lion, and (not to paſs through the fire, but)

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to dwell with devouring fire, and with everlasting burnings. Doth not Nature teach Men to propagate their kind? And doth not Grace teach them to propagate the Truth, and true Religion? without the first, Mankind would perish; without the second, Religion would soon be extinguished: or, have you more care to uphold the World, than to propagate the Gospel of Christ's Kingdom? if so, you are no better than a Man or Woman of this generation.

I perceive, there are many Bills presented for prayers in behalf of ungodly Children. It is well, if their Parents have not been wanting in their duty towards them. If they have not, let them not despond as to the success of their endeavours. I have lived to see the blessed fruits of pious Education, and that though Children so Educated have gone astray for a while, yet they have been graciously reduced at the last, & made their Parents joyful. And I think, it is not usual, that a Father should be a true fearer of the Lord, and one that conscionably dischargeth his duty towards his Children, and yet all of them should prove ungodly, and none of them be converted sooner or later, but perish

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in the uncircumcision of their hearts. Perhaps Parents may not always live to see it, but it is well enough if their Children come to Heaven after them.

I have insisted the more upon this Point, it being the great duty of my Text, and of such concernment as to generation-service.

The Exhortation reacheth Ecclesiastick Fathers, such as are the Ministers of the Gospel. For such Fathers also to their Children shall make known the Truth. And that is the reason why we make known those Truths to you, *viz.* that we may discharge our duties to our Children, that you may discharge the like to yours. And every week, and every Sabbath, and every Sermon we preach can testifie, that we are careful to make known the Truth unto you. *For we have kept back nothing that was profitable for you, nor have shunned to declare unto you all the Counsel of God.* For as *John* saith to *Gaius*, *We have no greater joy, than to hear that our Children walk in truth*, even in the Truth that we make known unto them. And let all that fear the Lord, bless his Name, that in such a day as this is, there are yet such Spiritual Fathers, who know the Truth, and labour

2. 1 Cor. 4. 15. Gal. 4. 19.

Act. 20. 27

3 John v. 4

labour to make it known to their Spiritual Children. For the time may come, that you may want them, when the Truth which is now made known to you by us, may be impugned by them that shall come after us.

3. There are also Scholastick Fathers, who have the care of training up Children in Learning, and these have their place as well as the former in the fifth Commandment. And a great advantage is put into their hands to make known the Truth unto their Children, as well as to inform their understandings in a way of Humane Learning. And I know no Calling, nor Relation, excepting that of the Ministry, that hath the like opportunity of making known the Truth unto posterity.

4. There are likewise Fathers Political. For there is the Father in the Family, the Father in the Church, the Father in the School, and the Father in the Common-wealth, or Countrey. And some think, that *Naaman's* servants called him *Father*, because he was a great Commander and Prince in his Country, to which also he had been a Father, having wrought great deliverances for the same. However, such a Father *was* the good

2 Kings 5. 1. with v. 13.

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King in my Text, and he owns himself as such an one in the very entrance of his Reign, when he was but 25 years old: For saith he to the Priests and Levites (exhorting them to their duty) *My sons, be not now negligent, for the Lord hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that you should minister unto him, and burn Incense.* They were (themselevs) *Fathers*, for *Hezekiah* calls them God's Ministers, and so they were Fathers to *Hezekiah*; but as he was their King, he was their *Father*, and they his sons. They his Spiritual *Fathers*, he their Political, and so, he was not only *Pater patriæ*, but also *Pater patrum*, not only the Father of his Countrey, but the Father of his Fathers, *i. e.* the Political Father of those who were his Fathers Ecclesiastically. But here is no opportunity of speaking to such Fathers as these, whose duty it is also to make known the Truth unto their Children, as *Hezekiah* did, as appears at large in his Reformation, 2 *Chron.* 29th, 30th, and 31th *Chapters*. 2 Chron. 29.11.

There are Fathers in age, gravity, & seniority, *viz.* such as are well stricken in years. Such are they, 1 *Tim.* 5. 1. *Rebuke* 5.

1 Tim. 5. 1. *not an Elder, but entreat him as a Father, the younger Men as brethren, the elder Women as Mothers, the younger as sisters.* The *Elder* here is not a Church-Officer, as some (perhaps) may think. For though it is *Presbyteros* in the Original, yet the same word is applyed to Elder Women also, in *ver.* 2. πρεσβύτερας ὡς μητέρας, the Elder Women, or (as if I should say) The *Presbytereſſes.* So that the Apostle here speaketh only of the several degrees of Age in each Text, Elder and Younger, calling the Elder Men *Fathers*, and the Elder Women *Mothers*, and the younger Men and Women, *Brethren and Sisters.* And that this is the true meaning of the Apostle, appears also, *Titus*, 2. 2, 3. where the Elder here, is called Aged there.

Now there is a duty also incumbent upon these, as touching the transmission of the Truth to the generation to come. Make it known therefore by your Examples, Counsels, Encouragements upon all occasions; for you have heard much, and seen much, and known much, and treasured up experiences, and therefore certainly, you should have much to say to such as are

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of the younger sort, and your years, gravity, wisdom, experiences will the better recommend the Truth unto them; for there is an honour due to you also, by vertue of the fifth Commandment. *See* Lev. 19 32.

Let me commend to you that Text of Scripture, *Oh God, thou hast taught me from my youth, and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works; Now also when I am old, and gray-headed, Oh God, forsake me not, until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.* Psal. 71. 17, 18.

The Psalmist was now an old Man, one of much experience, being taught of God from his youth; and as God taught him, so he taught others: For saith he, *Hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works; Hitherto*, that is, to old Age, for now he was aged, and gray-headed. And had he not done well? and was it not time now to dye? Yes, he had done very well, but yet he is willing to live a little longer, to do more, and therefore (saith he) *Forsake me not, until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.* As if he should say, I am willing yet to live a little longer to do more generation-

work, there is a care and zeal for posterity upon my heart, there are young people ready to come after me, and peradventure they will listen to the Counsel of an old experienced servant of God; and upon this account I am willing to spend a few days more upon Earth, to serve God and Posterity, without which it were not worth while to live.

Think upon this Text of Scripture, you that are old and gray-headed, and improve the little remainder of your lives to serve the succeeding generation. For you do not love Religion, if you do not love that it should live when you are dead; neither are they worthy of experiences, who dig and hide them in the Earth. When God had shewed his singular care and power in the preservation of his Church against her Enemies that attempted the ruine thereof, saith he, *Walk about Zion, go round about her, tell the Towers thereof, mark ye well her Bulwarks, consider her Palaces, that ye may tell it to the generations following.* So when God ariseth to build up *Zion*, and appears in glory upon the prayers of his poor people, *This must be written for the generations to come, that the people which shall be created may praise the Lord.*

Psal. 48. 12, 13.

Psal. 102. 16, 17.

Lastly,

Laſtly, There are ſuch, who though they are not called *Fathers*, yet are called *Elders*, *viz.* the Members of the Goſpel-Churches. And they are ſo called, not in reſpect of age, but of ſtate in theſe Goſpel-times, wherein the Church is paſt her non-age, and is now in an Elderly ſtate, requiring more Knowledge, Wiſdom, Strength, Seriouſneſs, Gravity, and Solidity in the things of God. How ſhould ſuch as theſe walk before others, ſo as to anſwer the Character of Elders? Let ſuch take heed then of carrying it below their ſtate. It is not for Elders to behave themſelves like Children. I have thought many times of that deſcription of the Goſpel-Churches in the *Revelations*, and how little it is anſwered this day by many that relate to ſuch Societies. Take heed then of ſcandals, anſwer your State, live up to your Priviledges, ſhine in Holineſs, that you may adorn the Doctrine of God and our Saviour, and commit and commend your State, Examples, and holy Lives unto the Generation to come, that they may attain to the knowledge of the Truth, by your walking in it; and ſay, Theſe Truths and Ways of holy Walking were Rev. 4. 4.

made known to me by the Gracious, Grave, and ſerious Lives of *ſuch as did relate unto the Churches of Chriſt.*

The Exhortation hitherto hath been to do all the good we are able, during our abode here below, ſeeing death will put end to all our opportunities. And I have propounded to you ſeveral Particulars wherein to be exerciſed this way.

Now before I proceed to any further Uſe of Exhortation, Let me mind you of that which may conduce to the attendance of this Duty, and that is, an heart enlarged unto publick ſervice. For that which greatly hinders the proſecution of this work, is the narrowneſs and ſtraightneſs of the Spirits of Men, whoſe concernments are commonly bounded within themſelves. Therefore you muſt endeavour to abound in love.

1. *Firſt*, To the glory of God. For this was at work in *Hezekiah's* heart, when he ſaid, *The living, the living, he ſhall praiſe thee.* This was uppermoſt, this was the firſt thing that was in his Eye, in his deſire of prolongation of life. For indeed, it is the chief good of Man, whom God made for himſelf, and who therefore is to have this end continually

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in his aim, and to be often thinking, What shall I do to glorifie God? *For of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to him be glory for ever, Amen.* And all is lost that ends not in him that is *Omega*, to whom you may well afford this honour, when you consider that he is *Alpha*. He that is the first, must be the last. Take heed then of a narrow selfish Spirit, which never looks so far as to this end; and that makes many so unactive for God, and his Glory. You must therefore believe more, and love more, and then you will act to this end more, &c. Rom. 11. 36.

2. *Secondly*, Your love to the glory of God must extend to the Generations to come. You must not therefore limit it to the present Generation, and never be concerned that God may be glorified in future Ages, even to the Worlds end: But your desires herein must reach to the very end of the World. For note the words of the Apostle *Paul*, *To God be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end, Amen.* His love to God's glory ran through all Ages even to Eternity. And so should your love do, or else you do not sincerely love it; neither indeed can Eph. 3. 21.

you love that his Glory be upheld during your own time, and not love the continuance of it to the Worlds end.

And such was the love of the Saints in the Scriptures, to the praise and glory of God; say they, *We will shew forth thy praise to all generations.* And therefore,

Psal. 79. last.

1. They desired the continuance thereof to the Worlds end.

2. They would also endeavour it. *With my mouth,* saith the Psalmist, *will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations:* And this hath been their care still, That the *people which shall be created may praise the Lord.* Thus you must love God's Glory both Intensively, and Extensively.

Psal 89. 1.

Ps. 102. 18.

2. As you must love the Glory of God, & that it may be extended to future Ages; so likewise you must love his Kingdom, or else you will never attend this great work unto which you have been exhorted. God's Kingdom, Power, and Glory must go together in your prayers.

And this was much upon *Hezekiah's* heart, when he said, *The Father to the Children shall make known thy Truth.* For

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he doth not ſay, I will make known thy Truth to my Children, though he purpoſed ſo to do, but *the Father*, that is, every Father that feareth God, not only in my time, but in the generations to come. Thus muſt your love be extended to the Kingdom of God, and, *Thy Kingdom come*, muſt be always in your deſires and endeavours. *Come*; how long? even to the end of the world, and never ceaſe coming, till Chriſt himſelf come. Now if this be upon your heart, and if you love that Chriſt ſhould reign in the world, you will do your utmoſt to promote it, in your capacity, in attending to the ſeveral Particulars propounded.

As you love God's Glory and Kingdom, ſo muſt you love his Goſpel. For 3.
it is the *Word of the Kingdom*; That is, Mat. 13. 19
The Word whereby God's Kingdom is erected, enlarged, governed, perfected. It is that in which, and by which our Lord Jeſus doth reign in the world, *viz.* as to his Spiritual Kingdom therein, of which I now ſpeak eſpecially. And you ſee in my Text, *Hezekiah's* love to the Truth, and to the making of it known from Generation to Generation; whereas the Goſpel is the

Truth

Truth, κατ' ἐξοχὴν, the Truth with an excellency, called therefore, *The Word of Truth*, and *The Word of the Truth of the Gospel*: The Truth made known not by the Light of Nature, but by Revelation; a mysterious Truth, and therefore a great Truth, that we use to say, As true as the Gospel. Now if you love this Truth, (as you have cause enough so to do) you will do any thing that may tend to the publication and propagation of it, by your praiers, pains, purses, Counsels, *&c.*

Eph. 1. 13. Col. 1. 5. Jam. 1. 18.

4. *Fourthly*, As you must love God's Glory, Kingdom, and Gospel, so you must love Souls. *The Father to the Children shall make known thy Truth.* Therefore the Father must love the Souls of posterity, and have a zeal for the salvation of them that shall succeed. And this will quicken your endeavours to the service of your Age, when you shall look upon the Souls of successours as of equal value with your own, seeing the ransom given for all Souls is the same.

Exod. 30. 13, 15.

And it is a blessed thing to be a lover of souls; it makes a man like unto Jesus Christ, whose love to Souls shines in his own blood, wherein *the kindness and love of*

Tit. 3. 4.

God

God our Saviour towards Man appeareth. His kindneſs and *Philanthropy*, *i. e.* love towards Man. For God and our Saviour are great lovers of Men; ſo ſhould we be. And *Chriſt's delights were with the ſons of Men from eternity.* We ſhould not therefore terminate our love in Men's bodies; we ſhould love the Jewel far above the Cabinet, and be frequently looking upon Mens Souls. Prov. 8. 31.

1. In compariſon with our own, and

2. In the Blood of the Son of God; and

3. In relation to Eternity; eſpecially the Souls of ſuch as are near to us. And the enlargement of our affections this way will amplifie our endeavours. In Heaven we ſhall love Souls that are ſaved, but here we muſt love Souls that they may be ſaved; A work which determineth in Glory.

Now all this requireth a publick Spirit, and an heart carried far beyond our ſelves. For a narrow Spirit acteth within a narrow compaſs, and is limited to private concernments: And that is the reaſon why there is ſo little Generation-ſervice performed. *All Men ſeek their own, and not the things which are Jeſus Chriſts.* Whereas our care ſhould Phil. 2. 21.

extend far beyond our own ſalvation; and love to God's Glory, future Ages, Chriſt's Kingdom, Goſpel, and precious Souls, ſhould all have a large room in our hearts and affections.

Thus you have had a great deal of work ſet before you, which will dye together with you. And to quicken you to it,

Conſid. 1. Gen. 27. 2. Conſider, That you know not how ſoon you may leave this world: As *Iſaac* ſaid to *Eſau*, *I am old, and know not the day of my death*, and yet he lived 43 years after that. Few men in Scripture knew the day of their death, ſo as *Hezekiah* here did, to whoſe life 15 years were added, and he reſolveth to ſpend them for God's Glory, and the good of Poſterity. So do you as for the remainder of your days, which may not be a quarter ſo many as his.

Caution. 2 Chron. 32. 25. Only have a care to perform better than he did. For when he was recovered, *he rendred not again according to the benefit done unto him.* Why? what was the matter? *His heart was lifted up.* *Hezekiah* ſaith here, *The living, the living he ſhall praiſe thee, as I do this day*; Yea, but how many days did this continue: For by and by he is praiſing him-

himſelf. Ye ſee the deceitfulneſs of the Heart of Man. This by the way.

Only conſider the uncertainty of the opportunity, and how ſoon it may be at an end, and that the dead cannot praiſe God, nor they that go down into ſilence. Now your Tongues may ſpeak for God, and ſo may your Lives, and Examples too; but ſhortly there will be nothing but ſilence. Pſal. 115. 17.

Oh! be not ſilent before death, for then you will be ſilent for ever. Peradventure you have ſpoken too little already, in order (I mean) to the work of your day. Speak therefore and act to God's honour, and the benefit of others, whil'ſt you live, or for ever hold your peace.

I have laid ſeveral particulars before you, concerning the ſervice of this life; & have you not been wanting in many of them? And is not your day alſo far ſpent? and are not the ſhadows of the evening ſtretched out? make it up for the future, as far as your remaining dayes will give you leave. And to this end,

2. Conſider the account you are to give when your opportunity is ended. What

Rom.14.12 ſaith the Apoſtle? *Every one of us ſhall give an account of himſelf to God.* And this is the very next thing after death,

Heb.9.27. *It is appointed unto Men once to dye, and after this the judgment.* *Once to dye,* not twice; for there is an Emphaſis in that little word, *once,* as appeareth by

Ver 28. the next verſe, *So Chriſt was once offered,* &c. And after this the judgment. 1. Dye. 2. But once. 3. Men, that is, all Men. 4. Then to judgment; and there is a *ſtatutum eſt* upon all this four. And the judgment will paſs upon your managing your preſent

Mat.25,19 opportunities. For when the Lord cometh, he cometh to reckon; ſo when you go to the Lord, you go to reckon, *viz.* how you have praiſed him here among the living, how you have endeavoured to further his Kingdom, according to your capacity, how you have lived exemplarily, embraced and improved all opportunities to appear and ſpeak for Chriſt; how, and for whom you have prayed; how you have comforted the feeble minded, and ſupported the weak, ſupplyed the outward wants of the Saints according to your ability, how you have ſtood for Chriſt in a ſuffering time, how you have improved thoſe Gifs of Grace which

which are proper to this Life, how you have endeavoured to transmit pure Religion and undefiled to your Posterity, by recommending it especially to your Children.

I tell you these are the great things, and all of them are the Work of the Living, and not of the Dead. How far you have attended them hitherto, you best know; If you have been wanting, you had need to make up in repentance, what hath been lacking in duty; and a great part of your repentance must be exercised in fruits worthy amendment of life. For so soon as ever your Soul is quit of its earthly Tabernacle, you must presently appear before God's Judgment-Seat.

3. Consider the greatness of the reward of good and faithful servants. They shall have as much joy as their hearts can hold. For they must *enter into it*, Mat. 25. 21 seeing it cannot enter into them. Neither the Sufferings, nor the Duties and doings of this present time are worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. But our Eyes are too seldom upon the recompence of reward, nor do we consider what God hath prepared for them that

love

love him: Whereas, did we seek for Glory, Honour, Immortality, we should continue patiently in well-doing. But few that fear God have Faith enough to take in the exceeding eternal weight of Glory that is prepared for them. If glorified Saints were to return to live again upon Earth, they would double and treble their duties beyond what they did in former times. For, what do they think when they are entring into the joy of their Lord? what? All this Glory, all this Joy, an Heart full, and a Heaven full, and to Eternity also, and that for so few imperfect services? And must I now spend Eternity in the enjoyment of God, and do none of those services any more for him, which were proper and peculiar to my temporal life? And must I be on the receiving hand as to all this Glory for ever and for ever? Certainly, if it were possible, This would make the Saints repent in Heaven, that they had done no more for Jesus Christ on Earth. But if such thoughts were incident to glorified Saints, they come too late, when once they are in Heaven: Now is your time to be working for that inestimable reward. When therefore you come to God, you must have

have a full perſwaſion, not only of his Being, but Bounty, that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks. But remember that it muſt be *diligently*. And be you never ſo diligent, he will abundantly reward it. And if Saints could but look into Heaven, and ſee how 'tis there, before they come thither, they would ſoon double their diligence, and work their fingers to the ſtumps for Chriſt. But many want Faith to believe ſo great a reward, or to apply it to themſelves, as that which God will certainly beſtow upon them after their work is ended. Heb 11.6.

4. Conſider yet further, That the good you do upon Earth may encreaſe when you are dead; and as that encreaſeth, ſo ſhall your glory ſtill be enlarged. For though the leaſt Glory above is unconceivable, and the words there ſpoken *unutterable*, yet there are aboundance of Argumentations in Heaven, and the ywho at their firſt entrance, wore but ſingle Crowns, after a while wear double ones. For it is ſaid, *God will give to every Man according to his wayes, and according tot he fruits of his doings*. So that, if their former doings on Earth do fructifie 2 Cor. 12. 4. Jer. 17.10.

after they are dead, God will reward them according to the Fruit thereof. For not only *their works*, but *the fruit* of them also doth follow them. And so do the evil works of wicked men follow them, as *Jeroboam's* did for above three hundred years together after his death; for that at last he felt a sevenfold Hell for what he did at first. Upon this account it is conceived that *Dives* desired *Abraham* to send *Lazarus* to go and preach to his five brethren, that they might avoid that place of torment; why? is there charity in Hell? no, it was not out of love to his brethren, but to himself, because he had corrupted them with his wicked life, and left a bad example behind him, which they followed, therefore he desired, that they might (if not be saved, for that I think a damned Soul cannot desire, yet that) they might not for his cause and example be brought into that place of torment, because this would be the encrease of his torment too. In like manner on the other hand, the glory of the Saints receives encrease as their labours and pains are fruitful, as Divines say of *Paul's* glory. One Heaven is too much for the best Saint that ever lived, were not the re-

Rev. 14. 13

reward of Grace, and yet your Heaven ſhall multiply according to the fruit of your good doings which you left behind you.

And this will be inſtead of doing good in Heaven, when the Saints leave that behind them, which keeps fructifying after they have left this world.

Why? what is that which they may thus leave behind them? Queſt.

Their good Works and Words, and Examples, and holy Lives, their Inſtructions, Exhortations, Counſels, Encouragements, their remarkable Actions and Sufferings for Chriſt. By all which they act and ſpeak *even after death.* Heb. 11. 4. And there is no other way that I know whereby to do good when you are in Heaven. And in this way ſhall the glorified Saints know in Heaven, whether the good works which they left behind them do fructifie, for they ſhall find and feel it in their enlarged Crowns, further Augmentations, and additional Glories. And then they ſhall break out into new Songs of praiſe to God and the Lamb, for helping them to ſow their Seed on Earth, which ſtill fructifieth after they are gone to Heaven. And in this way a Father may convert his Anſw.

Child, or Children after his death, as (as I doubt not, but) many have done. And then he heareth of it in Heaven, two wayes.

1. By his additional Glory.

2. By the joyful Acclamations of the Angels for the conversion of a sinner.

Luk,15.10 Wherefore let us endeavour so to live here a little while, that our good Works may live when we are dead, and act when we are at rest, and speak when we are gone down into silence, and bring forth fruit unto holiness, when we are in endless happiness; and bring Souls to Heaven after us to tell us that our good Works, and Words, and Examples, Instructions, Exhortations, Counsels, sufferings, Graces, are yet all alive and well, and like to yield a further Crop and Harvest of Joy and Honour to them that sowed them before their death. Oh, it is a blessed thing, and the Wisdom of Saints to leave a stock of good Works behind them, whereby to have a Trade going here on Earth, which will afford them fresh Incomes of Glory, whil'st they are already shining as the Sun in the the Kingdom of their Father.

And

And thus much for the first Use of Exhortation, to do all the good we are able, during our dwelling here on Earth.

2d *Branch of Exhortation.*

Let the second Exhortation be to call upon you to value your Opportunities, & to make the best improvements of time whil'st you are in the Land of the living, so as the World is often called. For *Hezekiah* began now to consider the price of time, who but lately was at the *Gates of the Grave, and deprived* (as he thought) *of the residue of his years*, that is, which he might have lived according to the ordinary course of Nature. Saith he, *Mine age is departed, and removed from me as a Shepherds Tent*, That is, which the Shepherd removeth from Plain to Plain, according to his occasions, as the matter shall require. 2. Ver. 10.

Now I am living here, by and by my Body must lodge in the Tent of the cold Grave, and my Soul return to God that gave it. *I have cut off like a Weaver my life, he* (that is, God) *will cut me off from the Thrum,*

א סרל ה *penicula-mento, quod Textor in extrema tela relinquit.*

Thrum, Ver. 12. I have cut off my life by my Sins, and God hath cut it off by his righteous hand upon me. Saith he, *I reckoned till morning*, Ver. 13. I shall be dead by the morning. And now *Hezekiah* begins to prize time, and cries, *The living, the living he shall praise thee.* Thus when once the swift Shuttle of your life is come to a Thrum, then you will see the value of Opportunity, and cry, *The living, the living*, &c. and reckon till the morning, and say, There is but one day more between my life and Eternity. And it may not be long ere that Morning or Evening cometh. For little did *Hezekiah* a few dayes before think that he had been so near unto death, being now but thirty nine years old, and God having wrought so wonderfully for him in his late preservation from *Senacharib*: For saith he, *Behold, for peace I had great bitterness.* God lately destroyed the Host of the King of *Assyria*, and gave me peace, and I said, I shall now now dye in my Nest, and multiply my dayes as the Sand, but I little thought of such a sickness to ensue my peace.

Ver. 17.

It seems he was surprized; and so may you be, if you look not well to it, for

for God now gives fair warning of it. They that will not prize Opportunity, ſhall have an opportunity to prize it: If they prize it not living, they ſhall prize it dying. Wherefore manage your ſeaſons for the beſt ends while you have them, and fill up your dayes with duty, and be not ſo eager upon the World, and the things thereof. Opportunity is a golden Mattock to dig for Heavenly Treaſure; do not wear it out, as many do, in digging for Pibbls, and at your latter end become a fool.

Beware therefore of idleneſs on the one ſide, and cumbring your ſelf with Worldly Occaſions on the other; but conſider, wherefore hath God given you life and time, but to be ſerviceable in your day, and to work for him in whom you live. He did not give you time to play the Truant, and deſign and labour to be rich, and to grow great in the World, and to arrive at ſuch a Revenue, and proportion of worldly Eſtate; but he ſent you into the World to do his work, and to improve your Time and Talent for him.

And therefore, when the World, or the Fleſh is putting ſuch Employmen s

upon you, which will devour much time, and divert you from the one thing neceſſary, tell them; That you muſt give an account of your time, and you muſt not rob your Lord and Maſter of his hours, which he ſent you to improve in his ſervice, &c.

And certainly it is an undervaluing alſo of Heaven, to think to go thither, and to do little or nothing for God upon Earth, though yet the recompence of reward is purely gracious, or of meer Grace, let our Labours for the Lord be never ſo many; for what are all our Studies, Works, Sweat, and blood, and Spirits, and Coſt, and Care, and Time expended upon Chriſt, in compariſon with an exceeding Eternal weight of Glory? Prize therefore and improve your times.

1. *Particularly.* Here are ſeveral of you that are young, or in your middle age, or about *Hezekiah's* years. Call your ſelves to an account, and enquire of your own hearts what you have done: Peradventure but little for God, and what will turn to a comfortable account. What then, if God ſhould now lay you (as he did *Hezekiah*) upon your ſick Bed, and threaten to cut off the Thrum of your

your lives? Would you not with him turn your faces to the wall, and weep ſore? And yet I tell you, *Hezekiah* had done a great deal of Work for God, during the time of his Reign unto this ſickneſs. He loſt no time, but fell hard to the Work of Reformation in the firſt moneth of the firſt year of his Reign. And he did a great deal during his fourteen years before his ſickneſs, and he did it alſo *in Truth, and with a perfect heart.* 2 Ch. 29. 3. Iſa. 38. 3.

But ſtill, what have you done, if you were now as near the gates of the grave, as here he was? And to theſe Gates you muſt come at laſt, and paſs through them alſo to the higheſt Tribunal, to anſwer to this Queſtion, *What haſt thou done?* How haſt thou improved time, occupied with thy Talent, filled up thy Relations, maintained good Works for neceſſary uſes, been active for the higheſt end?

Peradventure you will plead your ſmall capacity, and that you are but of mean degree, an obſcure perſon, and exerciſed in Low Employments, and of weak parts, &c. Obſerv.

Yea, but ſtill what ſaith *Hezekiah? The living, the living he ſhall praiſe thee.* Sol.

And

And are not you living? Are you not alive? For any Man or Woman living may praiſe the Lord, or elſe *Hezekiah* ſaith not well; But it is true what he ſaith, for any Man living may do his his generation-work. Is your capacity than ſuch, that you cannot praiſe the Lord? what ſaith the Pſalmiſt? *Praiſe ye the Lord*; who? *Kings of the Earth.* Yea, they are in a capacity indeed. Such as *Hezekiah* may do much that way, they are great Men, and have great opportunities. But what followeth? *Kings of the Earth, and all people: Princes and all Judges of the Earth. Both young Men and Maidens, and old Men and Children. Let them praiſe the Name of the Lord.* Men and Maids, old and young, all may; and all muſt attend the ſervice, none excepted.

Pſal. 148. 11, 12.

And therefore plead not your mean capacity, but ſerve your age according to your Talent. For he that had but one Talent, doth not ſay, Lord, I had but one, and what can a Man do with one? My fellow-ſervants had, one five Talents, the other two, and they might well employ and improve them. No, he ſaith not thus; He was convinced that one Talent might be improved to adva-

Matth. 25.

advantage as well as five, and that every one is bound to be Trading for God with what he hath given him; for, saith the Text, *He gave to every Man according to his several ability.* So that all of them had an ability, though several: One had a five-fold ability, another a two-fold, another a single. And he that had but a single capacity, was called to an account for his unprofitableness, and cast into outer darkness. The meanest therefore among you hath some ability, and woe be to him, if he doth not improve it. A young Man, a Servant, a poor Man, a mean Man, may do many things in tendency to God's Glory, and the good of others, whil'st he is living, *and the living, the living, he shall praise thee.* Ver. 15.

You that are stricken in years, you have much to account for. For you have lived long, and perhaps are now grown old, but have you been old Traders? Yes, as to a worldly account: Yea, but there is another, and a better Trade, & what have you done therein? God will call you to a reckoning for your worldly Trade, and especially for your Spiritual. You have gained thus much in the world, he will say, but what redounds 2ly.

redounds to my ſhare of all that you have done? This is the great Queſtion. Think ye; Oh how many opportunities have you out-lived, which will never have their Reſurrection: If therefore you ſhould ſay as *John* Baptiſt's hearers, what ſhall we do then? I anſwer,

1. Firſt, Be humbled for your former neglects, and miſpence of time, who in doing much, have hitherto done nothing; and judge your ſelves for your omiſſions, before your Lord and Maſter calleth you to account. *For if you judge your ſelves, you ſhall not be judged.*

1 Cor. 11. 31.

2. Bring forth fruit meet for Repentance. For though it is as impoſſible, that your former individual opportunities ſhould return, as that you ſhould grow young again, yet God may pleaſe to miniſter new occaſions to you upon your repentance, whereby to bring forth fruit in old age. It ſeems, that *Nicodemus* was an old Man when he came to Chriſt by night; For, ſaith he, *Can a Man be born when he is old?* As much as to ſay, *As I am.* But when he is converted, he thrives apace, and comes to Chriſt at noon, and owns him in the place of publick Judicature, and is a

John 3d.

mean

mean to diſſolve the Seſſion. And afterward he owns Chriſt crucified, and is at much coſt to embalm him, when his Diſciples deſerted him. The Old Man got the ſtart of them all, and of many others that ſet out before him. So it is ſometimes, *The firſt are laſt, and the laſt firſt.* John 7.30. —19.39. Mat. 19.30

Now therefore beſtir your ſelves, and redeem loſt time by improving what remaineth to the utmoſt, and ſee what you can do with a little remnant of life, and whether you cannot grow as faſt as Old *Nicodemus* did. Project improvments of life, which is a kind of *Save-all*, now that your light is near extinguiſhing.

Mak up in affection what may be wanting in action. If you cannot do much, yet love much. and you have cauſe enough to do ſo, in that God hath given you to live ſo long, who have done ſo little. If our Servants ſhould work no better for us, than many have done for God, we ſhould ſoon turn them out of doors. And therefore love the Lord the more, and that will alſo provoke you to do the more. 3.

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4. Stir up others to work for God, that what you cannot do by your own hands, you may do by others. For you shall have a share in their good actions, who work by your incitement. What good was done by the hands of thousands in the dayes of the reforming Kings of *Judah*, is still imputed to the Reformers that set them on work, as you may see in the Reign of *Asa*, *Jehoshaphat*, *Hezekiah*, and *Josiah*. And though the persons imployed might act from Principles of Hypocrisie, as some (at least) did in *Josiah's* Reformation; Yet the works were done in sincerity, as to the Reformers: They were done in Hypocricy as to the Instruments, in sincerity as to the principal Agent.

Jer. 3. 10.

Your time therefore is but short, and you cannot do much with your own hands, see what you cad do by others, as by your Wife, Husband, Children, Relations, Friends, Neighbours, and it shall be imputed unto them, if they do it sincerely, but to you howsoever, if you did set them on work in the uprightness of your heart.

5. Pray for death-bed Grace, Faith, Hope, Patience, Peace of Conscience, composedness of Spirit, & such a frame as

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is fit to glorifie God, and edifie others at your laſt farewel to friends. This is that which we ſhould all pray for, and it is that which God is pleaſed to grant to ſome, and it is a great mercy where it is vouchſafed, for it is not ſo eminently granted unto all that fear the Lord. Had *Hezekiah* now dyed, his Diſtemper was ſo violent, that he could not have dyed ſo comfortably, *I reckoned till morning, that as a Lion, ſo he will break all my bones: From day even to night, wilt thou make an end of me. Like a Crane, or a ſwallow, ſo did I chatter; I did mourn as a Dove: Mine eyes fail with looking upward: Oh Lord, I am oppreſſed, undertake for me.* But they that have done but little for the Lord, and are not now like to do much, had need to pray more, eſpecially, that thus they may finiſh their courſe. Ver. 13, 14

And if God grant you this mercy, you may perhaps do as much good dying, as ever you did living. The few words of the penitent Thief have done good to thouſands, though he was a Man that never did good, but much evil, till he was converted upon the Croſs. And thus much for the Exhortation to value Opportunities, and to make Luke 23. 40, 41, 42.

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the beſt improvement of time while it laſteth.

3d Uſe of Exhortation.

3. If there are opportunities of performing ſervice to God in this world, which are not to be enjoyed after death, and that the Saints do that for God here, which they cannot do in Heaven; Then, be not too eager in your deſires to dye. It was *Jobs* weakneſs, though indeed he was then in great diſtreſs and miſery. Job 3.21. *He longed for death, and digged for it more thân for hid Treaſures.* We muſt not be too forward to dig our own Graves: We may prepare them, as *Joſeph* of *Arimathea* did, and alſo we muſt prepare for them; but let us not dig them impatiently, or importunately.

Life is a great mercy, yea, and length of dayes. It is annexed to the obedience of the fifth Commandment. Pſ.91.*laſt.* *With long life will I ſatisfie him, and ſhew him my ſalvation.* Why? will not a Child of God be ſatisfied without length of dayes? Yes, he is ſatisfied to dye when God pleaſeth. If God will take him away ſooner or later, he he is ſatisfied.

It is said of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *David*, and *Job*, that they dyed full of dayes. And it was true, both passively, in that they were old Men; and actively, in that they were well satisfied to live so long. And therefore *Job* left off digging for death, long before he dyed. Peradventure you have your exercises both outward and inward, and withall you have good hopes of a blessed state in a better world; and now you long for death, and would fain be gone. Take heed, it is time enough to go to a glorious Eternity, and when you are there, you will never say, you came not thither soon enough. Here is more service for you to do: Do not love your Reward beyond your Work. A lazy servant will be often listening to the Clock, or looking upon the Sun, and longing for the Evening, not minding so much his Work as his Wages.

It is said *of Jehojada also, that he was full of dayes, when he dyed, being one hundred and thirty years old.* 2 Chr. 24. 15. He was full of days passively, and full actively, he was satisfied with this great length of dayes, and very well contented and thankful to live so long. He was deep in years (I suppose about, if not above,

2 Chr. 24. 3:4.— an hundred years old) when his Nephew *Joash* came to the Crown. For he lived to see *Joash* married, and after that the Temple repaired. And he died not long before *Joash*, who reigned but forty years. But few men lived so long in those dayes, and yet he did a great deal of good service unto the last. And when he died, they buried him in the City of *David* among the Kings, because he had done good in *Israel*, both towards God, and towards his house. And the most of it was done in his old Age.

4th *Use of Exhortation.*

4. If the people of God can do more service for him on Earth than in Heaven; Be exhorted to prize their lives pray for them, and improve them. If *Hezekiah* here had died of his sickness, the people of God would soon have missed him, as when (at last) he died, they did, for you know what came after. Consider what a deal of good ceaseth with the life of a good Man: It is true, his Works live, but his working is dead. Ministers shall preach no more; Church-Officers rule no more, dis-

diſpenſe no more; Beneſactors lay out themſelves no more; publick Spirits act no more. True; their Examples, Sayings, Writings, Memorie, Fruits of their former Works may ſurvive: But their perſons, perſonal actings, delightful preſence, ſweet fellowſhip, wholeſome Counſels, and ready helpfulneſs are dead and gone. Whereas theſe are great mercies, and many will ſay ſo when they are gone, who made but little of them while they had them. You know how the Elders of *Epheſus*, and the Brethren at *Miletus* wept at *Paul's* parting, ſorrowing moſt of all, that they ſhould ſee his face no more; and yet after that he lived many years, and wrote an Excellent Epiſtle to the Church at *Epheſus*. Oh, how would they have wept, had he then dyed at *Miletus*! But few precious ones are prized enough till dead, and perhaps not then neither. The *Iſraelites* did not ſufficiently value *Samuel* when he grew old, but when they had taſted what *Saul* was, and that *Samuel* alſo was taken away by death, then they all lamented him. Yea, and *Saul* himſelf alſo wanted him, who little regarded him whil'ſt living. *Bring me up Samuel*, ſaith he to the Witch at *Endor*.

1 Sam. 25. 1.

1 Sam. 28. 11.

Endor. He that before would not go to *Samuel*, will now go to the Devil for him. *Bring me up Samuel*; Yes, Rake him by all means out of his Grave: And, oh, that *Saul* could but once more speak with *Samuel*!

How few are they who have a just valuation of these living mercies, or that duly lay to heart the loss of them? For it is our duty also to bewail the death of such, as when the Church lost *Stephen*, *devout Men carried him to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.* Oh know the price of living Saints, especially the most useful ones.

Isa. 57. 1.

Acts 8. 2.

You that are Children, and have godly Parents, who have made known the Truth to you, take heed you think not they have lived too long; but know that it is your mercy, if they dye full of years, and come to their Graves in a full age, like as a shock of Corn cometh in its season. Improve their lives, and lament their deaths. *Sarah* was an hundred twenty and seven years old when she dyed, and yet *Isaac* lamented the loss of her for the space of three years, and nothing could comfort him, but his marriage with a dear *Rebekah.*

Gen. 24.

I beseech you love and honour your godly Parents, beg their continuance with you, and your profiting by them, and be very obedient to the first Commandment with a Promise. *Joash* had that benefit by his old Uncle *Jehojada*, who was instead of a Father to him, that it went well with him and his Kingdom whiles he lived, but miserably with both afterwards. Many Children have lost themselves together with their Parents.

Consider what I say. And then you that have such Ministers of Jesus Christ, as labour in the Word and Doctrine, and watch for your Souls, prize them, pray for them, and improve them, for you know not the consequences of their removal.

5th *Use of Exhortation.*

Lastly, Seeing there is more service to be done on Earth than in Heaven; how should this exalt Christ Jesus in our hearts, and enlarge them in love to him, who as he wrought so much for us on Earth, so still is he at work for us in Heaven? He, He is the great Worker in the highest World. You 5.

Joh. 17. 4. know what he ſaith in his prayer to his Father, *I have glorified thee on Earth, I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt me to do.* Yea, but we are to underſtand it of his Work upon Earth, for his Work in Heaven is not as yet finiſhed, nor will before the end of the world.

Alas! we can do little for Chriſt in Earth, and leſs in Heaven. Yet Jeſus Chriſt, whether in Earth or Heaven, is ſtill at work for us. It is not with him as with us. Heaven takes the work out of our hands, but it puts it into his. For thither is he gone to take and keep poſſeſſion, and to prepare places for us. There he executeth his Mediatory-Office, continually appears and makes interceſſion for us, ſheds abroad his Spirit, gives Commiſſion to the Angels, and Gifts unto Men, calleth and gathereth in his Elect ones, enableth us to work on Earth, governs the World, upholds his Church, and ſubdues their Enemies. All the Work of Heaven lies upon Chriſt's hands; and it is well it doth, or what would become of us on Earth!

And as this ſhould raiſe our Eſteem and Love of Chriſt, ſo ſhould it quick-

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en us the more to work for him on Earth, seeing he is still at work for us in Heaven. He wrought above thirty years for us here on Earth, but in Heaven above sixteen hundred, and thus he will continue his work to the end of the world.

To him therefore be glory, and honour, for ever and ever. *Amen.*